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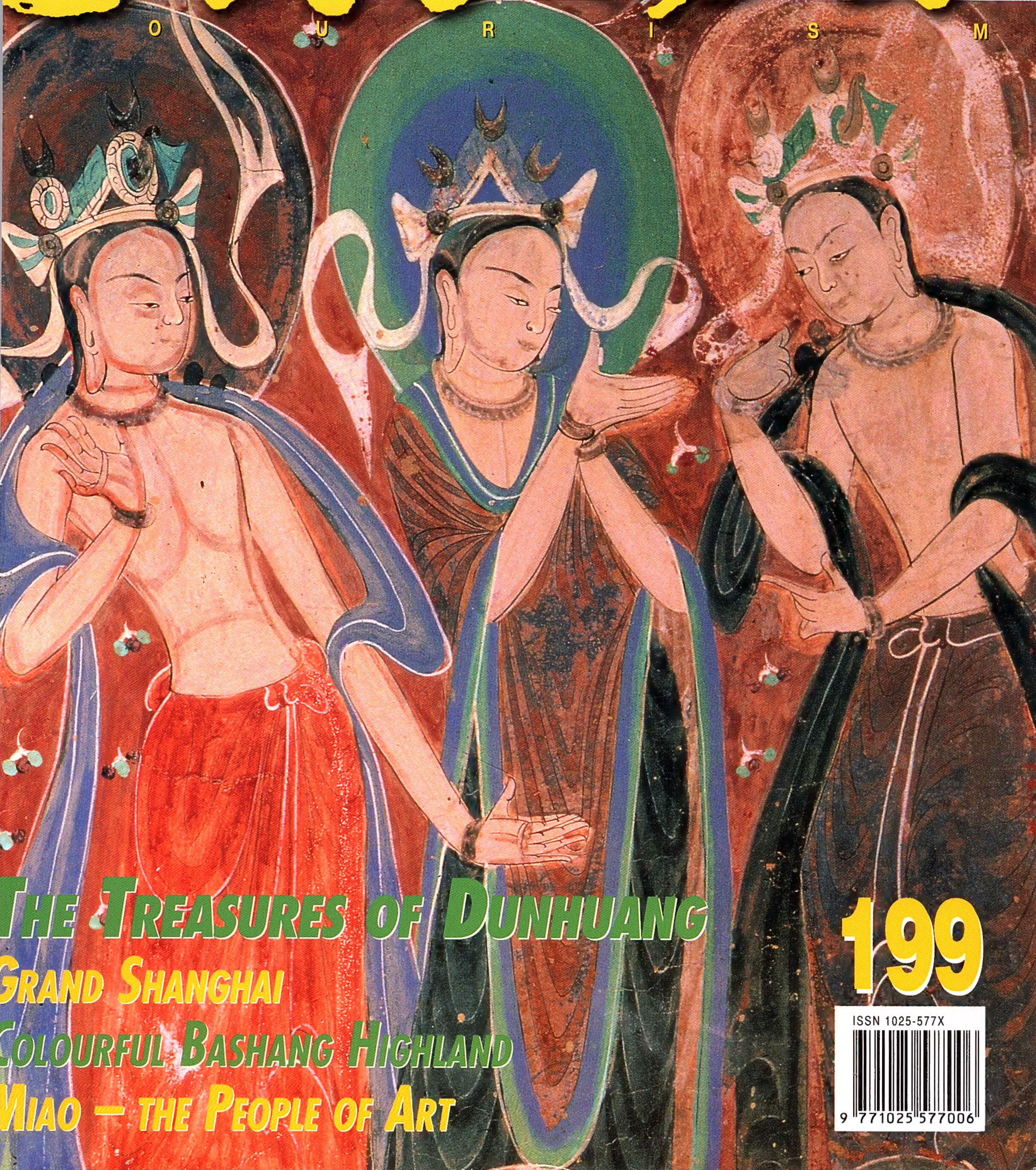

THE TREASURES OF DUNHUANG

GRAND SHANGHAI

COLOURFUL BASHANG HIGHLAND

MIAO – THE PEOPLE OF ART

199

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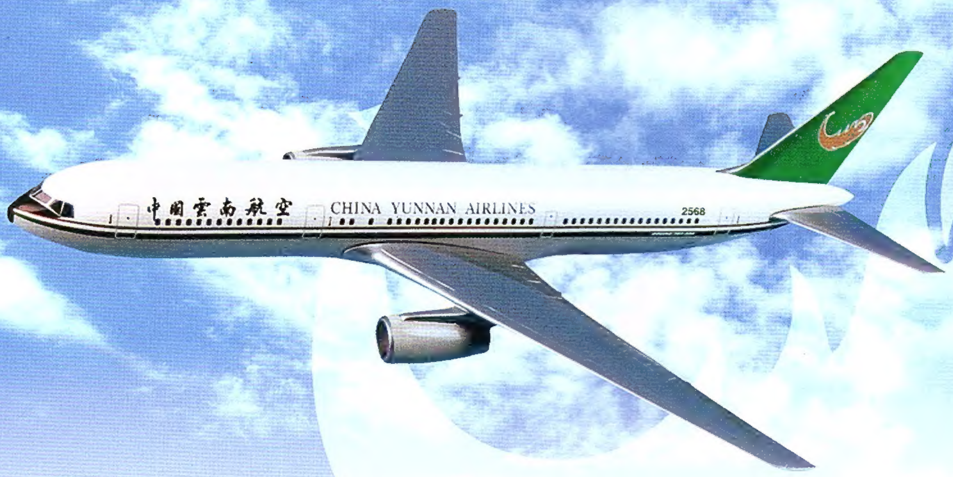

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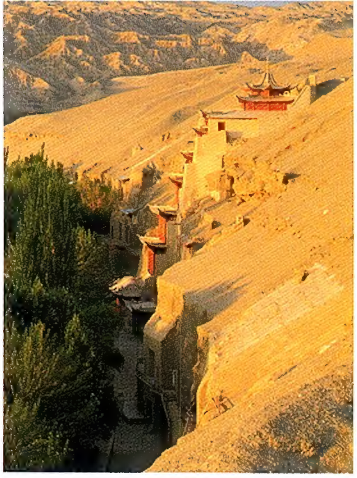

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Photos & Articles by Shi Baoxiu, Huang Yanhong and Chong Chiu Ching

The routes selected here are for travellers who plan to use the short Spring vacation to go on an excursion. Included are ideas for sight-seeing, entertainment and what local specialities to look out for.

Xijiang River — A Five-Day Excursion
Five - Day Trip to Shaoguan
Five - Day Excursion to Yao Villages
Four - Day Excursion to Chaozhou and Shantou

DISCOVERIES

Dunhuang 26

Photos by Xie Guanghui and Wang Miao
Article by Xie Guanghui, Chan Yat Nin and Yee Ket Cho

The grottoes honeycombing the one-kilometre cliffs of Dunhuang attract people from all over the world. The treasure trove of Buddhist art, built and developed over 1,500 years, entertains visitors with thought-provoking stories as well as invaluable murals and sculptures....

The Story of Dunhuang
The Treasures of Dunhuang

LANDSCAPES

Bashang — A Fragrant Grassland 70

Photos by Jiang Ping and Zhai Dongfeng
Article by Jiang Ping and Yan Hong

In spring and summer, the area is alive with lush, green foliage; in autumn, golden grasslands are complimented by clear blue skies dotted with white clouds. The scenery on the highland is simply enchanting.

FROM THE EDITOR

The Rays of the Morning Sun 8

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LEISURE

Mongolian Yurt-Hotels: A Unique Travel Experience 46

Photos & Article by Shan Xiaogang

Staying in a Mongolian yurt, one feels extremely close to Nature. Sleeping on the ground, counting the stars overhead, riding on horseback, roaming over the grasslands.... such relaxation cannot be found anywhere else.

SHOPPING

Wuhu Iron Pictures 79

Photos & Article by Huang Yanhong

It is beyond ordinary people's imagination that pictures can be created out of iron. In Wuhu, Anhui Province, seeing is believing — these exquisite pieces are works of art.

CITY PROFILE

Shanghai, the Grand City 52

Photos by Chen Haiwen and Xie Guanghui

Article by Gloria Shang

A unique geographic situation and historical vicissitudes have rendered this port city with a special position in China, as well as the world. Parallel to its remarkable economic growth, the international metropolis also enjoys a culture that cannot be found anywhere in the world, East or West.

PEOPLE

The Colourful Miao 64

The Miao are one of the largest minority ethnic groups in China. Most of them inhabit mountainous regions and Miao communities can be found in Hunan, Guizhou, Yunnan, Guangxi and Hainan. A nationality of art, the Miaos like to wear colourful clothes and are accomplished singers and dancers.

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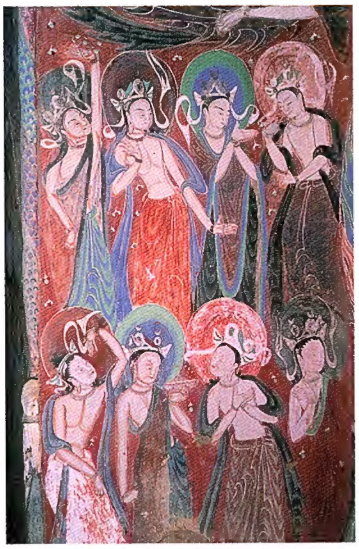

Wang Miao

Front Cover: The Treasures of Dunhuang

Article by Chan Yat Nin

These two photographs (135 mm Kodak slide 5009) taken at Wugong Mountain, Jiangxi Province, are both distinctive in composition.

Wugong Mountain, at a moderate height of 1,000 metres, is covered by luxuriant plants. By selecting one detail, the photographer gives a perfect exposure of the charming beauty of the scenery. The photographs are simple, but the compactness of the lines, colour and light can be felt strongly by the audience.

In both works, specific subjects (in *Winding Up*, the people; in *Clouds and Mountain*, the tree) have been chosen to reflect the magnificence of the mountain.

Clouds and Mountain

by Guo Jiasheng

With a poetic rhythm, this photograph reflects the interrelationship between the clouds and the mountain. The grey colour provides a quiet atmosphere, but the golden rays penetrate the clouds and tumble up waves, giving a subtle contrast between tranquillity and mobility, lightness and darkness.

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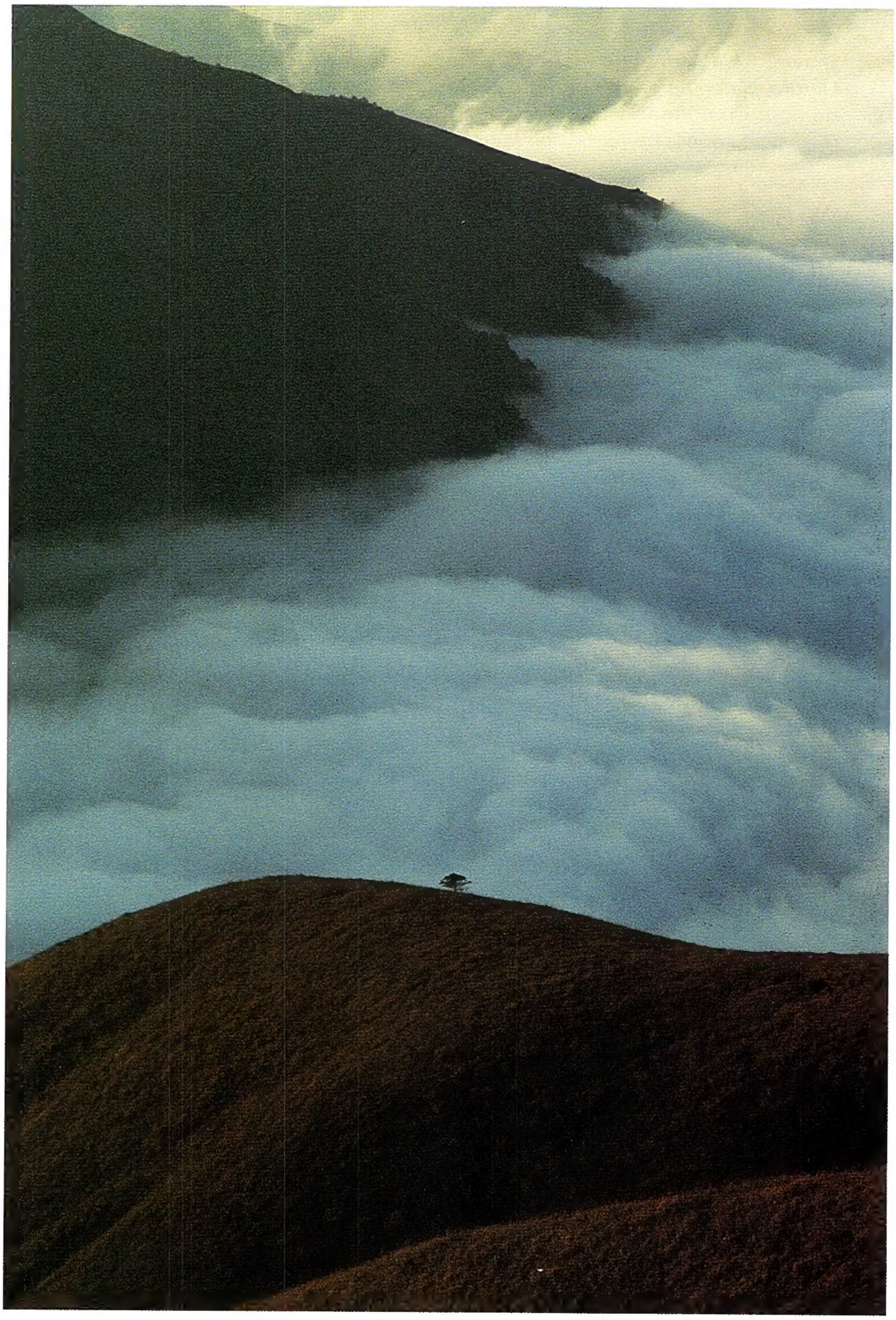

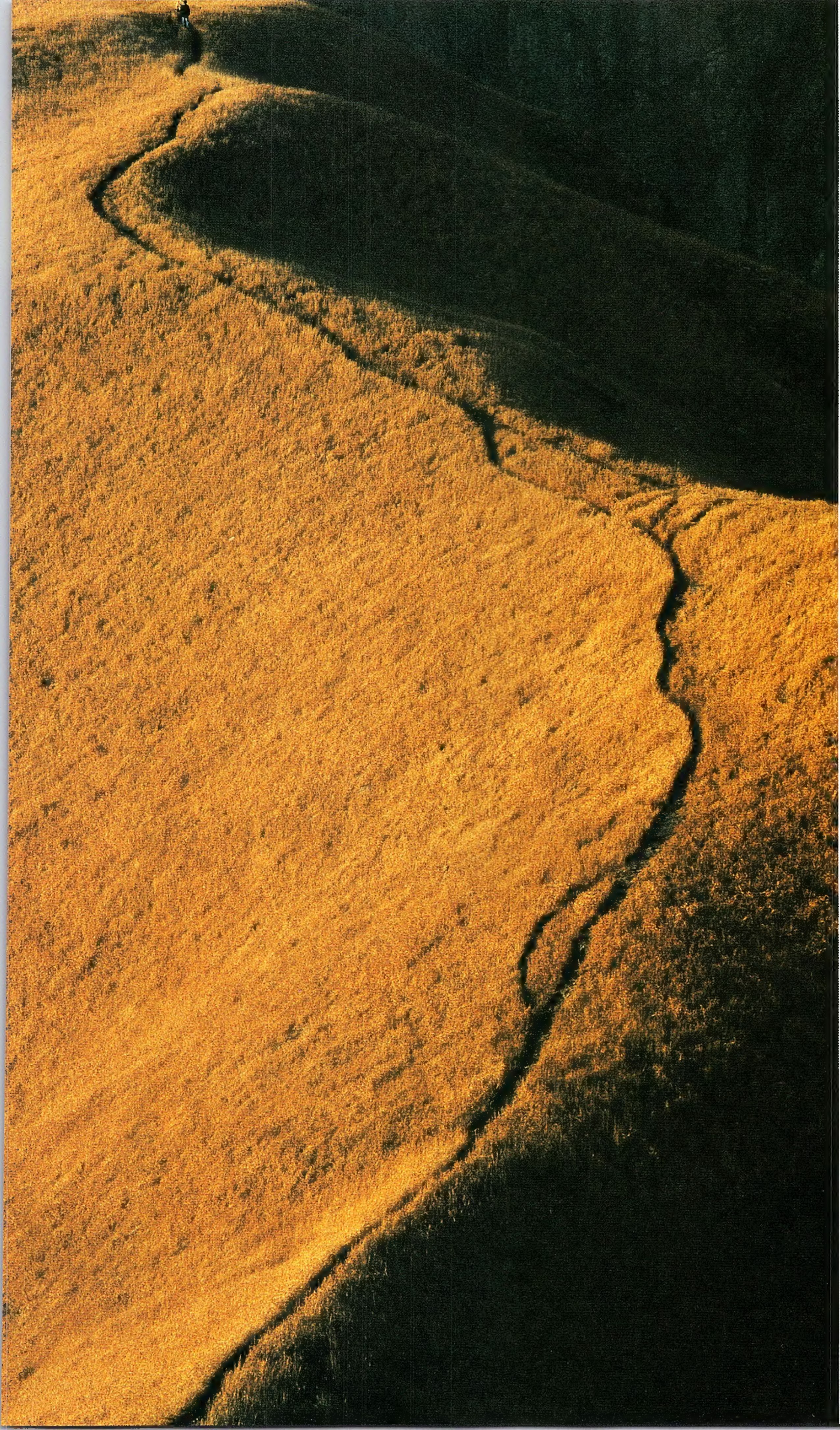

Winding Up

by Guo Jiasheng

This is a scene of autumn on Mt. Wugong. In a glowing mix of yellow and brown, the mountain is divided into two sections by the road meandering along the ridge and the setting sun. The colour is homogeneous, but the contrast between light and dark is striking. The dividing line falls exactly on the winding road at the top of the ridge. This photography gives the audience an abstract aesthetic perception.

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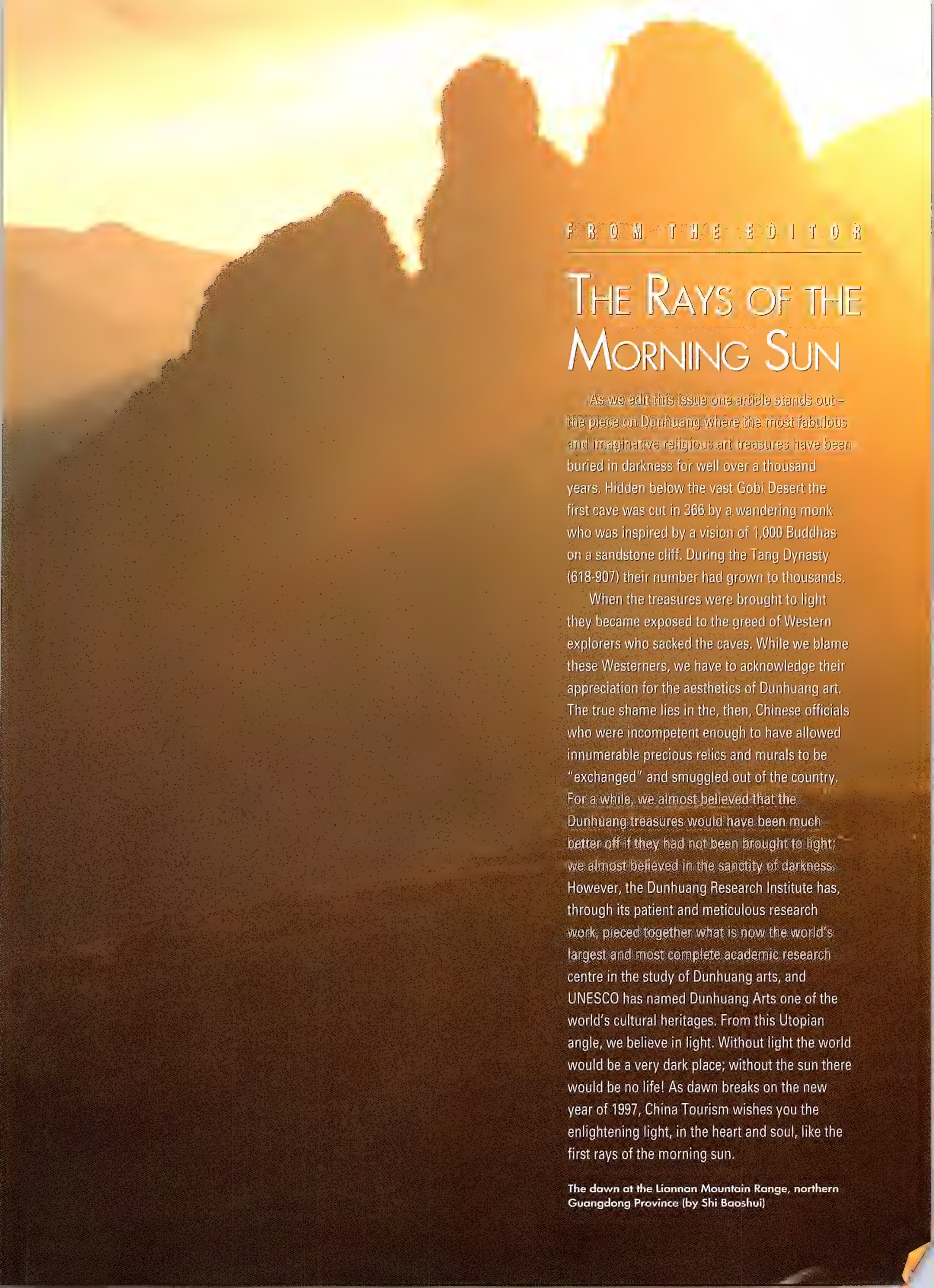


FROM THE EDITOR

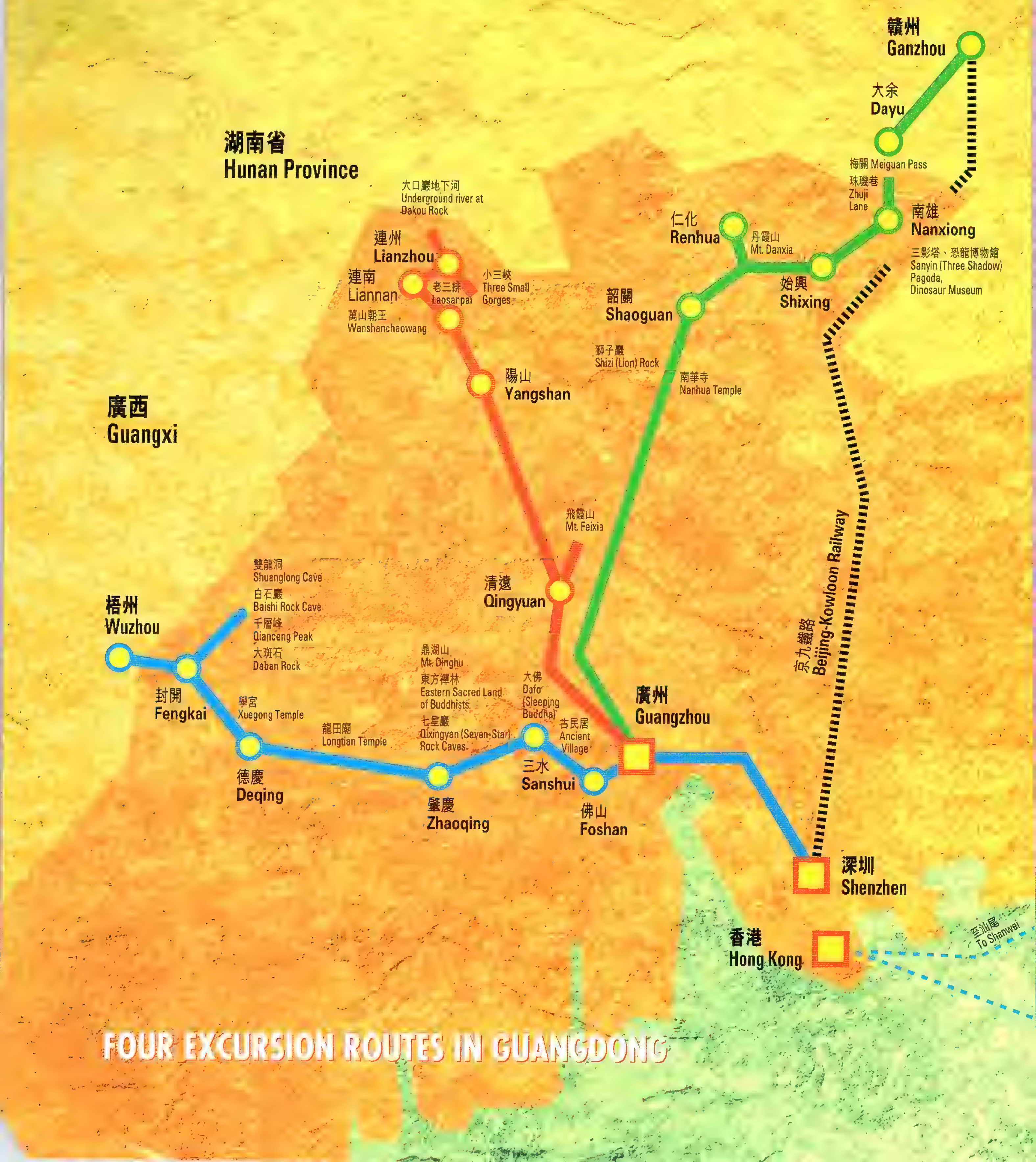
THE RAYS OF THE MORNING SUN

As we edit this issue one article stands out – the piece on Dunhuang where the most fabulous and imaginative religious art treasures have been buried in darkness for well over a thousand years. Hidden below the vast Gobi Desert the first cave was cut in 366 by a wandering monk who was inspired by a vision of 1,000 Buddhas on a sandstone cliff. During the Tang Dynasty (618-907) their number had grown to thousands.

When the treasures were brought to light they became exposed to the greed of Western explorers who sacked the caves. While we blame these Westerners, we have to acknowledge their appreciation for the aesthetics of Dunhuang art. The true shame lies in the, then, Chinese officials who were incompetent enough to have allowed innumerable precious relics and murals to be "exchanged" and smuggled out of the country. For a while, we almost believed that the Dunhuang treasures would have been much better off if they had not been brought to light; we almost believed in the sanctity of darkness. However, the Dunhuang Research Institute has, through its patient and meticulous research work, pieced together what is now the world's largest and most complete academic research centre in the study of Dunhuang arts, and UNESCO has named Dunhuang Arts one of the world's cultural heritages. From this Utopian angle, we believe in light. Without light the world would be a very dark place; without the sun there would be no life! As dawn breaks on the new year of 1997, China Tourism wishes you the enlightening light, in the heart and soul, like the first rays of the morning sun.

The dawn at the Liannan Mountain Range, northern Guangdong Province (by Shi Baoshui)

EXCURSIONS TO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FOUR EXCURSION ROUTES IN GUANGDONG

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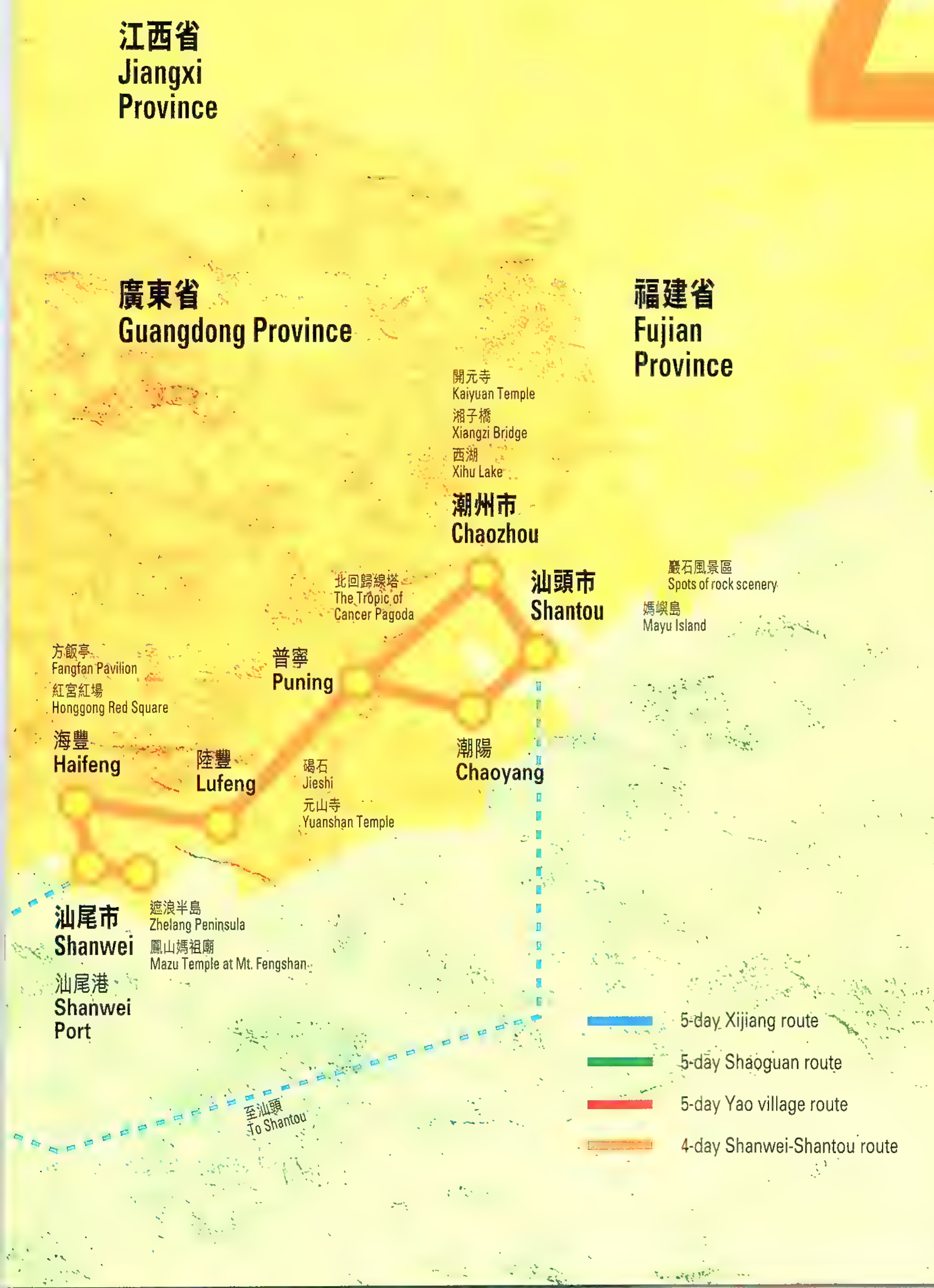
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媽嶼島
Mayu Island
北回歸線塔
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普寧
Puning
方飯亭
Fangfan Pavilion
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Lufeng
碣石
Jieshi
元山寺
Yuanshan Temple
潮陽
Chaoyang
汕尾市
Shanwei
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Zhelang Peninsula
鳳山媽祖廟
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汕尾港
Shanwei Port
至汕頭
To Shantou
5-day Xijiang route
5-day Shaoguan route
5-day Yao village route
4-day Shanwei-Shantou route

For those bitten by the travel bug the dilemma of what to do during the **Spring Festival** holiday is a real problem. While the few days-off are hardly long enough to warrant travelling to distant climes, the alternative of holing up indoors for the duration of the holiday is simply not a decent way to kick off the lunar New Year. Our editors hereby have designed three mini itineraries which combine a few days of wining, dining, sightseeing and entertainment – with satisfaction guaranteed.

XIJIANG RIVER ● A 5-DAY EXCURSION

Photos & Article by Shi Baoxiu

The route from Sanshui to Wuzhou along the limpid Xijiang River in Guangdong Province glides the traveller through a series of exotic mountains, mysterious karst caves, ancient and new temples, primitive abodes, and a newly built Buddhist sanctuary.

November 2 Early in the morning, I boarded a bus in Hong Kong and arrived four hours later at Sanshui, a town situated at the confluence of the Xijiang, Beijiang and Suijiang rivers. From there I took a taxi directly to the forest park at the edge of the city. This is were a Sleeping Buddha statue measuring 100 metres from head to toe reclines on a mountain top. True to its reputation as the world's largest reclining Buddha, the statue is so enormous that it dwarfs the Hall of Nourishing Life on the mountain top making it look like a child's building block, and the people look like tiny ants. Unfortunately, because the mountain rock is so soft and loose, the statue began crumbling two years after it had been completed. I learned that the local abbot is thinking of raising funds to encase the figure in bronze. If his dream comes true, Sanshui will become the site of the world's largest bronze Buddha.

Having stayed at Sanshui for half a day, I drove for 30 minutes along an expressway and reached Zhaoqing, a city perched on the shore of the Xijiang River. Here I did some sightseeing and shopping in the city's long shopping street.

November 3 I joined a tour to the Qixingyan (Seven-Star) Rocks where an isle in the river is covered with several hundred Buddha statues, with the image of Tathagata lying in the centre. I had heard long ago about this newly built "Oriental Temple", but I was surprised to find such a vast collection of marble Buddhist sculptures.

The afternoon found me on Dinghu Mountain at the secluded **Guangyun Temple**.

1

1. Daban Rock is said to be the "Biggest one in Asia".
2. "Eastern Sacred Land of Buddhists" is situated on an island.

2

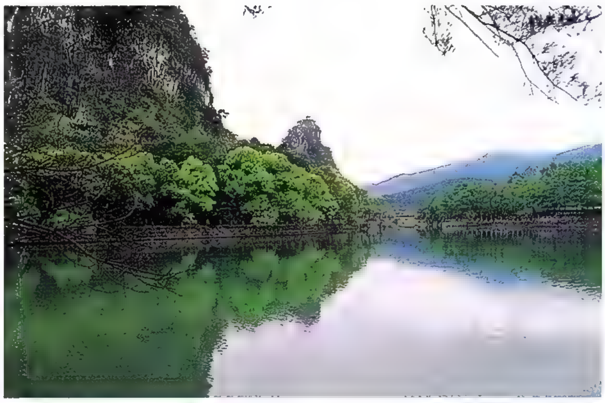
November 4 I left Zhaoqing in the morning, travelled west along the Xijiang River for an hour or so, to arrive at Yuecheng, a tiny town famed for its **Dragon's Mother Temple**. Visitors are fascinated by the roof ridges and wall-tops which are all decorated with finely crafted pottery sculptures of figures and animals.

Boarding a boat on the wharf outside the temple, I sailed down river and arrived at Deqing two hours later to visit the Xuegong Temple which dates back to the Song and Yuan dynasties. Disappointed, I was on my way again 20 minutes later – save for a hall, there is nothing else to see. A car took us to Fengkai, where after supper I went to see the landmark of the Tropic of Cancer.

November 5 Today I joined eight other hotel guests on a one-day excursion to Fengkai. Shortly after we drove past the Xinghua (Apricot Flowers) Village, I saw a huge boulder protruding from the emerald green fields, which is said to be the largest rock in Asia.

Taking a right turn after the Daicun Hot Springs, we drove through the Qingxi Valley and arrived at the '**Thousand-Fold (Qianceng) Peak**'. As the name suggests, the mountain comprises numerous horizontal slate layers. A fellow passenger began counting them, I suppose doubting that there could really be so many layers, but before long she lost count.

1



2

Our next programme was to visit an exotic cave in the Baishi Rock. Despite the bright day, we found ourselves groping in the dark once we filed into the cave. Only after the lights were switched on did we see stalactites of a hundred and one shapes and images, all in a dazzling rainbow of colours. The other two caves we visited, the Shuanglong and Huangshi caves, were equally kaleidoscopic.

Dusk was gathering when we returned to the seat of Fengkai County. At the suggestion of a fellow traveller, we boarded a minibus and headed for Wuzhou, Guangxi Province. Half an hour later, we entered Zhongshan Road lined with restaurants selling various local specialities.

We returned to Fengkai in Guangdong Province, where we checked into the Xinghua Guesthouse situated by the Xijiang River.

November 6 I sailed to Guangzhou, and returned to Kowloon by express train.

TRAVELLERS' TIPS

♦ The Route

Day 1: The bus leaves from Kowloon at 7:30 a.m. and arrives at Sanshui at 12:30 in the afternoon. Visit the Sleeping Buddha, the crocodile centre and the ancient village. Then take a bus to Zhaoqing where you can have dinner, and afterwards go to the Xinghu Amusement Park to see the musical fountains and then shop in the city's night markets.

Day 2: Tour the Qixingyan Rocks and the Dinghu Mountain scenic zones.

Day 3: Take the morning bus for a ride west along the Xijing River to Yuecheng Town for a visit to the Dragon Mother's Temple. After lunch continue your journey west either by boat or by bus to Fengkai for a night stroll along the shore of the Xijiang River (the ruins of the Xuegong Temple is en route).

Day 4: Take a one-day excursion to Daban Rock, the Thousand-Fold Peak, the Baishi Rock Cave, the Shuanglong Cave and other scenic attractions. After returning to Fengkai, you can take the bus to Wuzhou, a city famous for its restaurants.

Day 5: In the morning board the boat from Fengkai. As you sail down the Xijiang River feast your eyes on the picture-perfect scenery. After reaching Zhaoqing, you may take the express boat or bus, and head directly back to Hong Kong or Guangzhou. Alternatively, you could sail from Hong Kong directly to Wuzhou and then travel east to Sanshui.

♦ Transport Express boat services are available every day from Hong Kong to Sanshui, Zhaoqing and Wuzhou. Direct bus lines are in

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service every day between Sanshui and Zhaoqing. Book tickets through the China Travel Service.

River and land transport services are convenient between Sanshui, Zhaoqing, Yuecheng, Dexing, Fengkai and Wuzhou. In Fengkai and Zhaoqing there are too many scenic spots to cover them all in a single day by public bus; therefore, join one of the group tours organised by local hotels and travel services.

◆ **Accommodation** Finding a hotel in Sanshui, Zhaoqing and Fengkai is easy as there are a large number of medium to luxury hotels to choose from. A room in a two-star hotel costs 200-300 yuan.

Each city has its own unique style of cooking. Most restaurants in Wuzhou are situated on either Zhongshan Road or Jiefang Road.

◆ **Shopping** In Zhaoqing the "Seven-Star Sword Flower" is famous for being an ideal ingredient for making a tonic soup. Zhaoqing also produces *duanyan*, one of China's four major brands of ink slabs. Wuzhou is famed for its tonic wines.

Translated by Ling Yuan

1. It is hoped that this "Sleeping Buddha" statute in Sansui will one day be plated with copper.
2. Qixingyan Rock Park (by Chan Yat Nin)
3. Baishi Rock Cave
4. At night time, people like to stroll along the banks of Xijiang River.
5. A "Nightless City" in Huaqiao Building, Sanshui
6. There are plenty fruits and vegetables to taste in Wuzhou.

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THE SCENIC AND HISTORIC SHAOGUAN

A 5-DAY EXCURSION

Photos & Article by Chong Chiu Ching

Eating field snails at the foot of Mount Danxia.... From Meiguan Pass, the territories of both Guangdong and Jiangxi can be seen below.

October 29 My journey began in Shenzhen where I boarded a train heading for Shaoguan. By the time I arrived, six hours later, it was already completely dark.

October 30 Early the next morning I hired a mini-bus and went to visit the Shixia Culture Site at the Shizi (Lion) Rock where the fossils of Maba Man, dating back almost 130,000 years, have been found. Inside, groups of sculptures display the Maba people's everyday actives at that time: some fishing, others making tools or holding a clan meeting.

As I left the cave I climbed up some stairs and was welcomed by the vista of Maba Town spread out before me. I rented a small boat to tour the inside of the cave. As we rowed,we had to dodge the overhead ragged rocks.

I then hurried on to Nanhua Temple, one of the four major temples famous in Guangdong. After lunch, I went on to visit the Grand Buddha's Hall. The first thing that caught my eye were the three 8-metre-tall statues of Amitabha, Sakyamuni and Buddha of Medicine which stood in a row from left to right. On either side of the hall there were 500 arhats all in different poses.

By the time we got to Mount Danxia it was already after 4:00 p.m. We desperately wanted to see the setting sun and so ran towards the Xianglong Lake. Just as we got there the golden sunshine formed a blink of "Jesus light" in the sky and the trees lining the banks were beautifully reflected in the clear waters of the lake. It was a wonderful sight!

Around 7:00 p.m. we began to feel hungry and decided to try some of the typical local dishes at the restaurant which stood at the entrance to Mount Danxia. The owner of the restaurant greeted us warmly: "The local field snails are delicious. All freshly caught today from around the streams in the mountain valleys, they're not polluted and are very fresh and sweet. The local fish is good too. We make a soup from the fish's head and some dishes with its meat."

Not only was the food delicious, but the environment was also excellent – hills and streams surrounded us on all four sides.

October 31 At 5:00 a.m. the next morning, we groped our way up the 1,500 stone steps with some difficulty, and just as we began wondering whether it was safe to climb the cliff using the iron chains and railings, we saw hoards of people already standing at the Sunrise Watching Tower. Encouraged by the sight, we summoned all our energy, and eventually reached the summit. The sight of the beautiful new dawn was worth the effort.

Later, we joined a boat tour along the Jingjiang River. The boat moored at the scenic Yangyuan Mountain and very soon we reached the Yangyuan Rock, famous because it resembles a man's reproductive organ. The rock draws many tourists – some women even worship it in the hope of conceiving a son.

In the afternoon we hastened to Nanxiong county town to visit the Three-Shadow Pagoda and the Dinosaur Museum. The pagoda is the only Beijing-brick pagoda with a dating record in Guangdong Province. With great interest, I climbed to the fourth and fifth floors. The wind was so strong as I stood by the balustrade that I felt the wind would carry me off at any moment. Displayed in the Dinosaur Museum are fossilised dinosaur eggs, dinosaur footprints and a model of a dinosaur's skeleton.

November [illegible] Today we visited the ancient lane of Zhuji and Meiguan Pass. Legend has it that most of the residents in the Pearl River Delta in Guangdong Province were from 164 clans under 73 family names in Zhuji Lane. Intrigued, many tourists come to inquire about the roots of their ancestors. Afterwards we took the ancient post

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road and headed north to Meiguan Pass at the top of Meiling Mountains, the demarcation line between Guangdong and Jiangxi. Standing on the pass, we were able to gaze far into the distance and were rewarded with a magnificent view of Guangdong's Nanxiong and Jiangxi's Dayu.

After passing through Meiguan Pass we entered Jiangxi Province. Plum trees grew everywhere along the road. Local people told us that although the temperature drops to -1°C in January, the plum trees remain in full bloom, creating a beautiful sight against the drifts of snow. People believe they have to go to the far Northeast to see rimed trees, but in fact they can see similar scenes everywhere in around Meiguan Pass.

Leaving the Meiguan Pass, we came to Dayu County, a city famous for its wolfram industry. It was lunch time and we took the opportunity to taste the salted pressed duck, a local speciality.

In the afternoon we embarked on the road to Ganzhou and arrived at dusk. We

1. **Statutes of arhats in Daxiong Temple**
2. **Many women make pilgrimages to worship Yangyuan Rock (by Yang Chubin)**
3. **Sunset at Mt. Danxia**

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hastened to Bajingtai to watch the magnificent scene at the confluence of the Zhang and Gan rivers and on the way visited the ancient city wall built during the Song Dynasty (960-1279).

November 2 Early the next morning we went to visit Yugutai built during the Tang Dynasty (618-907). While enjoying the inscriptions left by literati such as Xin Qiji, Wen Tianxiang and Su Dongbo, we enjoyed the view looking down over the city of Ganzhou. Afterwards we visited the Ciyun Pagoda built in the Northern Song Dynasty and the nearby Confucian Temple. By this time it was almost noon, and we had to board our plane back to Shenzhen.

Translated by Xiong Zhenru

TRAVELLERS' TIPS

◆ The Route

Day 1: Take tourist train No.12 from Shenzhen at noon to arrive in Shaoguan at 7:00 p.m. Take a stroll through the night markets at Shaoguan or Qujiang.

Day 2: Hire a taxi to tour the vestige of Maba ancient people at Lion Rock and then move on to Nanhua Temple where you can enjoy a vegetarian meal at noon. The next stop should be Mt. Danxia where you can visit the scenic spot of Xianglong Lake and watch the sunset at "A Strip of Sky". In the evening, you can dine on snails and fish.

Day 3: At around 5:00 a.m., grope your way in darkness up to Zhanglao Peak to see the sunrise. Then cruise along Jinjiang River till you reach Yangyuan Rock Scenic Area. In the afternoon, travel to Nanxiong where Sanyin Temple and Dinosaur Museum are located.

Day 4: In the morning, hire a taxi to travel to Zhuji Lane, tour the ancient Meiguan plank road and then walk through Meiguan Pass to Jiangxi Province. Then take a bus to Dayu County where you can have lunch and tour the "artificial desert". In the afternoon, travel to Ganzhou to visit the Eight Scenes Park, Bajingtai and city walls built in the Song Dynasty.

Day 5: Visit Yugutai, Ciyun Temple and Confucius Temple. Then return to Shenzhen by air.

If you have time, consider spending one day in Ganzhou to visit more scenic spots such as Tongtian Rock and Kongdong Hill and then take the night train No.105 to arrive in Shenzhen at 10:00 a.m. the next morning. However, it is not easy to buy a train ticket from Ganzhou as the city is a small sub-station on the main Beijing-Kowloon Railway.

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◆ Accommodation

Shaoguan: Plenty of hotels, hostels and guesthouses are located near the railway station. A standard double room costs around 200 yuan. Alternatively, you can stay at Nanhua Hot Spring Hotel (200 yuan for a room and 18 yuan for a hot spring bath) which is situated near Maba and Nanhua Temple. You can get to there by taxi which should cost below 50 yuan.

Mt. Danxia: There are a few hotels costing around 200 yuan for a double room, actually on the mountain or at its foot.

Nanxiong: Zhuji Grand Hotel or Yingbin Hostel, costing around 200 yuan for a double room.

◆ Transport Train No.12 from Shenzhen to Shaoguan: departing 12:58 p.m. and arriving 7:00 p.m. (hard seat: 87 yuan, soft seat: 133 yuan.)

From Shaoguan Railway Station to Nanhua Temple, Lion Rock, Mt. Danxia: Mini-bus: 20 yuan, Van for 6 people; 300 yuan per day

From Nanxiong to Zhuji Lane, Meiguan Pass, Dayu: Van for hire; 400-500 yuan per day

Flights from Ganzhou to Shenzhen: departing 12:00 p.m. on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday (cost: 500 yuan)

◆ Food Vegetarian dishes are available at Nanhua Temple ◆ Cafeteria at Mt. Danxia: dinner for four: 110 yuan; breakfast: 8 yuan per person; meal at mid-night: 60 yuan per person ◆ Restaurants in Dayu: One dish plus soup cost about 10 yuan. ◆ Restaurants in Ganzhou: Four dishes plus soup cost about 110 yuan.

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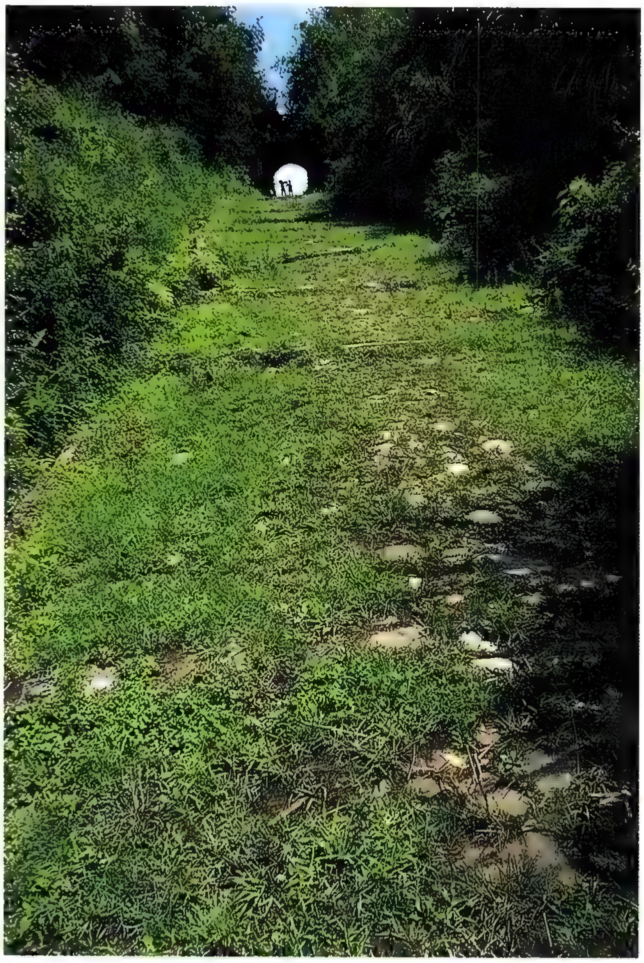
◆ Shopping Shaoguan Baimao tea, dried bamboo shoots, mushrooms, Buddhist pearl wristlet, Saki made from black glutinous rice and wooden bowl made in Zhuji are specialities of the area.

1. Inhabitants of Zhuji Lane (by Chan Yat Nin)
2. Dayu County viewed from Meiguan Pass
3. The homes of Hakka people in Nanxiong
4. "Artificial desert" in Dayu County
5. Sculpture of ancient settlers in Zhuji Lane
6. In ancient times, people used Meiguan Pass to travel from north and south. (by Chan Yat Nin)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YAO VILLAGES, NORTHERN GUANGDONG

A 5-DAY EXCURSION

Photos &
Article by Shi Baoxiu

Liannan and Huizhou in north Guangdong are famed for their landscape and folklore. The ethnic villages inhabited by the Yao people are of particular appeal to visitors.

October 20 I took the bus in Hong Kong at 7:00 a.m. and arrived at Qingyuan at about 11:00 a.m. After lunch, I boarded a motorboat at Fengjing Wharf and an hour later I was already marvelling the ancient Feilai Temple with a history of more than 1,400 years. Continuing my journey, I reached Feilai Gorge, where I took a bus which nosed its way up along a winding mountain until I reached the Feixia Cave, which turned out to be a cluster of classical structures evocative of a medieval European castles. Looking down the Feixia Mountain from the Songfeng Pavilion at the top, I was thrilled to see a world cocooned in verdant greenery. I thoroughly recommend Feixia Mountain to holiday-makers wanting to relax.

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Climbing down the mountain I dined on fresh fish and shrimps aboard a boat on the river. The meal was made all the more delectable by the charming setting. I returned to Qingyuan for the night.

October 21 Early in the morning I headed north to Liannan by way of Yangshan. Thankfully the shifting scenes along the way dispelled the monotony and boredom of an otherwise tiresome five-hour journey. As our bus entered the territory of Liannan County, the mountain slope grew steeper, the number of people thinned out considerably and those we came across were attired in traditional Yao clothes. I hurriedly disembarked from the bus and headed for the village. Within 20 minutes an ancient blue stone mountain path conducted me to the village which turned out to be a typical Yao community called Laosanpai. Some men and women in ethnic costumes sat chatting and laughing by a tiny pond. No one approached me as I ventured into the cluster of unique abodes.

The Yao people live a Spartan life by growing grains, other than wheat and rice. Their houses are simply furnished with pumpkins hanging down from the top of walls, sweet potatoes laid on the floor, and simple farm implements hung on the walls.

I had hardly reached the highest point of the village when I heard the sound of drums being beaten. I hurried to the scene, dancers were already jumping and skipping over the bamboo poles moving swiftly between their ankles. Following the example of the Yao villagers, seven or eight of the visitors immediately joined in. One young lady simply stretched out her legs when one of the shifting poles sent her shoes flying. As she bent over to pick them up, her wrists became pinned in between two poles, creating a peal of hearty laughter from the spectators. After a few failed attempts, the newcomers managed to learn the ropes, albeit a little awkwardly.

That night I checked into the Yao Village Inn in Liannan. After dinner I attended a variety show of ethnic Yao singing and dancing by a bonfire in the courtyard.

October 22 After breakfast I joined a tourist group for a visit to the Vista Terrace, which provides the panoramic view of a smudge of mountain peaks nicknamed "Ten Thousand Mountains Paying Tribute to the King". Descending from the terrace along a mountain path, I arrived at a mountain summer resort, where the guests were being entertained by some ethnic Yao singing and dancing. Proceeding further into the mountain, I

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arrived at Youling Laopai where ancient customs are still practised; naturally it has become the venue for local festivities on the 15th day of the 10th lunar month. The only problem is that it takes two hours to walk there, as it is not yet accessible to cars.

After lunch a bus drove me from Liannan to Lianzhou in less than 15 minutes. In the afternoon, I arrived at Dakou (Big-Mouth) Rock Cave. Apart from a huge gaping mouth, the cave is also known for a 1,500-metre-long underground river that runs right through its bosom. Boarding a boat down this river, we feasted our eyes on a variety of well-preserved stalactites.

October 23 In the morning a pleasure boat carried us towards the Huangchuan Three Gorges on the Lesser Beijiang River. We threaded our way through Longquan, Taohuayuan, Lengjia and Yangtiao gorges and then returned to our starting point. The scenery of the Yangtiao Gorge is the most beautiful, with the top of the cliffs covered with lava in the shape of giant tree leaves.

In the afternoon we took the bus on our journey south, and by the time we reached Qingyuan dusk had already fallen.

October 24 I took the bus at the Qingyuan Long-Distance Bus Station at 9:30 a.m. and arrived at Luohu, Shenzhen at a little past one o'clock in the afternoon. As I waited to clear customs, I saw fashionably attired men and women standing around me, which was such a contrast for the indigenous mountain communities of the ethnic Yao people. This gave me the feeling that in mere days I had been transported back and forth between two entirely different worlds.

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TRAVELLERS' TIPS

♦ The Route

Day 1: Starting from Hong Kong, one arrives at Qingyuan at lunch time. After touring the Feilai Gorge in the afternoon, one returns to Qingyuan for the night.

Day 2: Taking the bus, which arrives at Liannian at three o'clock in the afternoon, taking lunch at Yangshan on the road. After a tour of the city, check into the Yao Village Inn, which stages evening song and dance parties by a bonfire.

Day 3: A tour of the Laosanpai Village to watch performances of singing and dancing in the Yao style. In the afternoon, visit the "Ten Thousand Peaks Paying Tribute to the King" and to watch

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1. Sweet potato, corn and pumpkin are staple foods of the Yao people.
2. One pond is always reserved for the cattle.
3. Tourists jumping and skipping over the bamboo poles
4. Yao men usually wear a red turban.
5. Yao dancers
6. "Let's have a wild party – the Yao way."

more singing and dancing performances at the mountain summer resort. Then take the bus to Lianzhou.

Day 4: Touring the underground river in the Dakouyan Cave in the morning and the Lesser Beijiang River in the afternoon.

Day 5: Taking the bus for a trip south to Qingyuan. After Lunch, a bus will take you directly back to Hong Kong or Shenzhen.

The bus station on the ground floor of the Luohu Commercial Tower, Shenzhen, operates two buses to Qingyuan at 9:00 and 14:00 respectively. More than a dozen buses and mini-buses shuttle between Qingyuan, Liannan and Lianzhou.

While in Lianzhou and Liannan, it advisable to book your one-day excursions either through the local China Travel Service or one of the hotels, which proves to be more convenient than going it alone.

◆ **Accommodation** The rate for a standard room at the China Travel Service Plaza in Qingyuan is about 150 yuan, while that in the Yao Village Inn in Liannan is around 200 yuan. The same rate applies for the Lianzhou Hotel. All the rooms in these hotels have washrooms and IDD telephone.

◆ **Food** Qingyuan is known for its tender chicken which is unusually delicious. Restaurants in Lianzhou and Liannan serve tonic snake liquors and have several unusual dishes on their menus.

◆ **Shopping** Shops in Liannan sell an assortment of delicacies such as dried sweet potato, hawthorn, fig, pheasant and meat.

Translated by Ling Yuan

The Laosanpai Yao village

4

CHAOZHOU FOR GOURMETS

Chaozhou and Shantou attract tourists not so much for their scenery but more for the variety of exotic food that their restaurants offer.

Photos & Article by Huang Yanhong

November 1 I fell fast asleep shortly after embarking a boat in Hong Kong and did not wake up until I arrived at Shanwei. One advantage of taking a boat at night is that it saves both time and hotel expenses.

The ocean has bestowed great wealth on Shanwei. On a 6,000-square-metre floor space I saw booths selling all sorts of seafood – I was at the wholesale fish market. We had lunch at the Jinlun Restaurant at Ermalu Road, and found the dish "Barbecued Nine-Section Shrimp" delicious. I was also impressed by the restaurant's trademark dish "Steamed Fish with Its Mouth Grown on the Left Side". The fish itself, as its name describes, is quite unusual to look at, but it is extremely palatable.

When night fell I decided to take a stroll around the city. The road leading to a nearby fishing village was lined on both sides with restaurants offering a good variety of foods including porridges cooked with seafood or preserved meat. The temptation was so great we eventually succumbed and ended up having another big meal in one of the restaurants.

November 2 I left Shanwei. While changing bus at Haifeng, I visited the Fangfan Pavilion. It was here that Wen Tianxiang of the

A 4-DAY EXCURSION

Southern Song Dynasty made a last stand against the Yuan army. The Yuan troops launched a surprise attack while Wen's soldiers were having a meal in the pavilion. The meal proved to be the undoing of the Song soldiers.

Arriving at Shantou at night after visiting Jieshi Town in Lufeng, where the famous Xuanwu Mountain and Yuanshan Temple are situated. The first thing I did was to find the Piaoxiang Restaurant, an old establishment known among home-coming overseas Chinese for its rich variety of snacks, especially its *guo* made of rice flour wrapper and various stuffings such as peach, chives, bamboo shoots, shrimp and other flavours.

November 3 After an exhaustive sightseeing tour of the city, I had lunch at the Chaojiangchun Restaurant in the Grand International Hotel. The restaurant is elaborately furnished in a classical fashion, and the food never fails to titillate the palate. The "Taiji Vegetable Soup" comes in a mysterious mixture of white and green, and it tastes unusual but good. The forte of the restaurant is its own recipe for "Fried Rice Cake on a Preheated Iron Plate". No less ambrosial are the other traditional dishes, such as rice cooked with snakeheaded fish meat and spare ribs stewed with fermented soy sauce. For desert, I tried the mashed taro with ginkgo, a famous local delicacy. Apart from the Chaojiangchun Restaurant on the fourth floor, the Fuxiangge Restaurant on the third floor is another place to visit for those wanting to try more varieties of Chinese culinary styles.

In the afternoon I found the famous Xinxing Restaurant. Having been in business for over half a century, Xinxing is known for its beef

1. **Food stalls in Chaozhou (by Huang Songhui)**
2. **Seafood restaurants in Yucun (Fishing Village) Road, Shanwei**

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balls traditionally made by beating raw beef with a pair of three-kilogram hammers until it becomes a fine mince. It is a time-consuming job; a strapping young man can only produce 1.5 kilograms of minced beef in 50 minutes. As the demand for these beef balls is growing, the restaurant has invested in machines which do the job seven times faster. The meat balls prepared in this fashion delight the palate by being crispy and chewy at the same time. The glutinous rice roll is another surprise the restaurant has to offer, for it tastes sweet at one end and salty at the other; it turns out that the salted yolk of a duck egg is hidden at one end of the roll. The people of Shantou like to incorporate this unique combination of salty and sweet tastes in many of their dishes and snacks.

[illegible] Having arrived at Chaozhou in the morning, I first went to visit the West Lake. I relaxed at a teahouse which serves the Gongfu Tea, or thick Wulong tea served in tiny cups. The preparation of the tea is an impressive sight in itself, almost ceremonial. First, water is fetched from an ancient well and boiled on a charcoal stove. The teapot and cups are heated beforehand by pouring hot water over them, and when pouring the tea, the kettle held mid air, so that the water falls in an arc as it lands in the teapot – the purpose is to bring out all the flavour of the tea leaves. To cut off the water flow, the kettle nozzle is brought down rapidly to the edge of the cup so that the flavour of the tea is kept in the pot. Cups are not filled one by one; instead, the cups are lined up and teapot makes the rounds of all the cups so that the tea in every cup is of the same density. After each round of tea is drunk, the cups are re-heated before the next cup of tea is served. Gongfu Tea is a popular obsession in Chaozhou.

Chaozhou people like to eat rare-cooked food. When clams are "cooked", for example, the diner is supposed to eat the meat together with the blood, which is believed by the locals to be more nourishing.

Apart from delicious food, I was also impressed by the way Chaozhou chefs use seasonings and spices. For every dish the amount of seasoning used is strictly adhered to the point of being dogmatic. When I intentionally used a different sauce for a particular dish, I found the taste considerably less delightful. As a matter of fact, among the eight major Chinese culinary schools, the Chaozhou school is the most exacting about the use of sauces and other seasonings. For instance, raw fish has to be eaten with orange oil; sweet-flavoured fermented soy sauce has to be used when deep-frying shrimps, and river snails cannot do without mustard when being fried.

TRAVELLERS' TIPS

♦ The Route

Day 1: Take the night boat from Hong Kong's Central Ferry Terminal. The boat reaches Shanwei at 8:00 the next morning. Tour the Temple of Goddess Mazu and the Pingqing Lake; the 17-metre-tall stone statue of Goddess Mazu on the Fengshan Mountain is worth the visit. Have lunch at Jinlun or one of the other restaurants on Erma Road, where quality seafood is very reasonably priced. Returning from a tour of the Zhelang Peninsular and other scenic spots in the afternoon, dine at any one of the seafood restaurants on Fishing Village Road.

Day 2: Arriving at Haifeng by bus in the morning, visit the city's Honggong Square on foot and then go to Fangfan Pavilion. Then drive on to Lufeng County, where, after lunch, you may catch the bus which takes you to Jieshi for a visit of Xuanwu Mountain and the Yuanshan Temple. Returning to Lufeng, you may continue your trip to Shantou. After checking in to a hotel, take a stroll at Fuhecheng Road, where there is a wide variety of seafood and other dishes.

Day 3: Go sightseeing around the Queshi Scenic Zone. Go to the Piaoxiang Restaurant situated inside a tiny public park for a taste of famous Shantou snacks. In the afternoon, see the spot marking the Tropic of Cancer. For dinner you may choose to go to the Xinxing Restaurant at Xinxing Street to taste the famous beef balls, or the Chaojiangchun Restaurant on the fourth floor of the Grand International Hotel or the Fuxiangge Restaurant on the third floor. At night, catch the bus to Chaozhou.

Day 4: Visit Kaiyuan Temple and the West Lake in the morning and have lunch at the dining room of the Yingbin Hotel where many authentic Chaozhou dishes are served. After lunch you may catch the bus at the bus station opposite Chaozhou Guesthouse and head for Shenzhen.

If you have one more day to spare, visit Xiangzi Bridge, the site of an ancient porcelain kiln at Bijiashan Hills, and the cliff carvings on the Hulu Mountain. Then, in the evening, have Gongfu Tea at the Chunuquan Teahouse on West Lake, or visit the Chaozhou Embroidery Factory leaving the city in the afternoon.

1. In early morning, Laojie Street is already crowded.
2. *Lusui* duck cooked in Shitou Township (by Huang Songhui)

♦ Transport

Hong Kong → Shanwei	By boat: HK$188-268
Shanwei → Haifeng	By mini-bus: 5 yuan, taxi: 10 yuan
Haifeng Bus Station → Fangfan Pavilion	By tricycle: 3 yuan
Lufeng → Shantou	By bus: 30 yuan, 4 hours.
Shantou → Chaozhou	By bus: 10 yuan, 1.5 hours.
Chaozhou → Shenzhen	By coach with berth: 100 yuan, 8 hours

Translated by Ling Yuan

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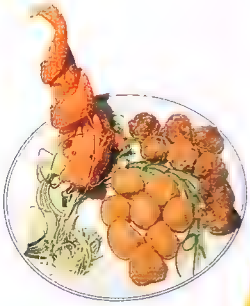
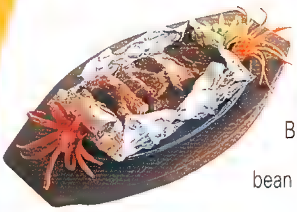
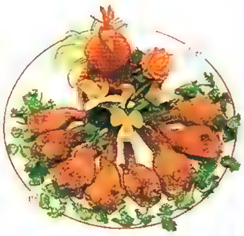


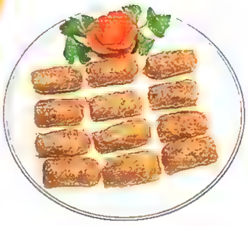
Twin-Taste Fry Fried balls made of milk gelatinised by corn flour and fruit.



Steak in Bean Sauce Braised steak seasoned with Puning bean sauce.

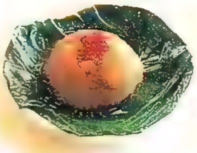


Fried Stuffed Chicken Wings Boneless fried chicken wings stuffed with glutinous rice, shrimps, chopped mushrooms and Chinese chestnuts, served with tangerine oil.



Sweet-Salty Rolls of Glutinous Rice Sweetened glutinous rice with the yolk of a salted duck egg wrapped in thin sheets of bean curd.

Xinxing Beef Balls Minced beef mixed with premium fish stock, dried shrimps, diced meat and fish.

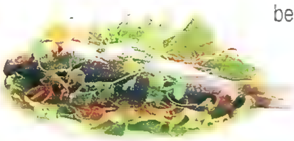


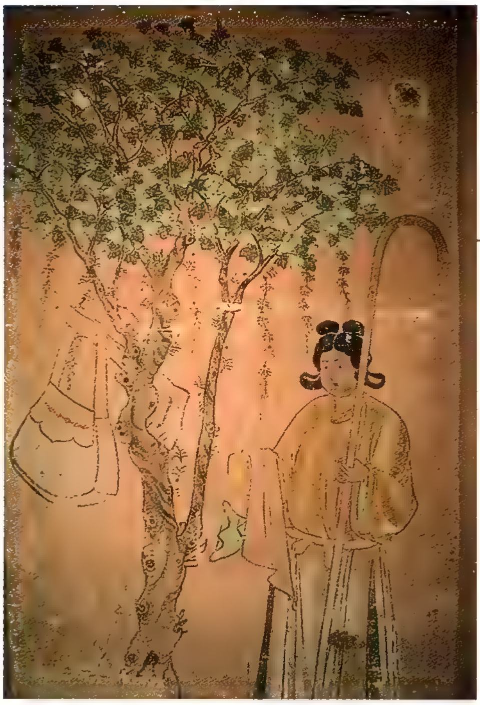
Haoguo A bun made from rice flour, yolk, taro, Chinese chestnut and pork.

Taro Pudding Steamed taro beaten and mixed with ginkgo, sugar, a little water, diced meat and dried tangerines.

Pot-Stewed Goose Goose feet and other parts stewed with chopped pepper, aniseed, tangerine peel, licorice root, sauce, crystal sugar, ginger and mango, served with garlic and vinegar.

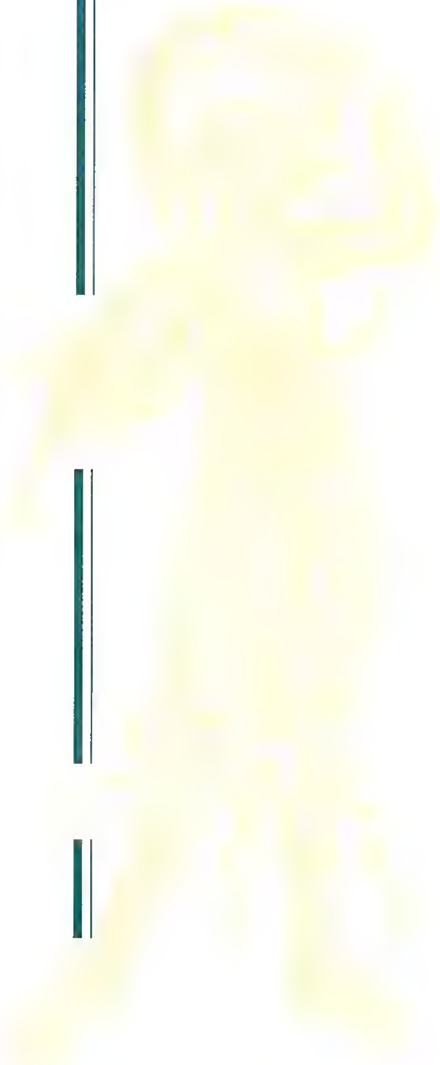
Steamed Snakeheaded Fish Steamed snakeheaded fish served with vegetables, tangerine oil and bean sauce.





Cave No. 17

Also called "Sutra Hiding Cave", it was cut in the late Tang Dynasty (618- 907). Originally a side cave of Cave No. 16, it was closed in 1035 during the reign of Jingyu of the Northern Song before this area was occupied by Western Xia. The cave was not found until 1900. From it more than 40,000 antiques were retrieved. On the northern wall inside the cave is a late Tang painting of twin trees. Under the trees is an image of a woman holding a piece of fabric and a walking stick. The tree branches are hung with cloth bags.



Dunhuang

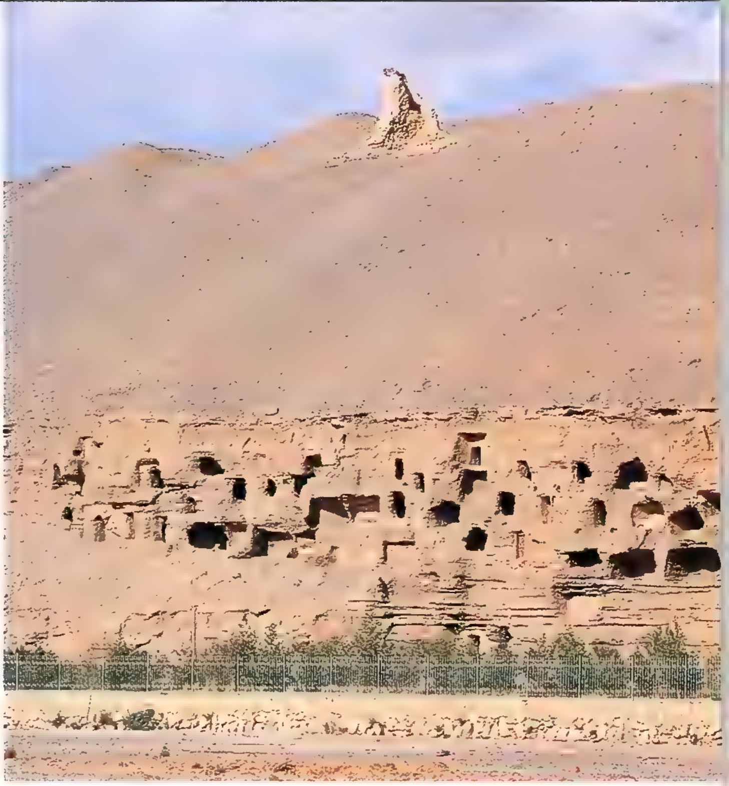
Having passed through Jiayu Pass, our bus entered the area around Dunhuang — one of the most arid regions of China . It is so barren and wild that as if we were visitors on another planet. Suddenly, a lush green oasis loomed out of nowhere. Obviously, it was a mirage floating on the giant sand dunes.

However, it is not the eerie vastness of the desert nor the romantic star-studded night skies that attract visitors to this place – tourists come to Dunhuang because of the superb Buddhist art on view in the nearby Mogao Grottoes.

In 1899, Buddhist scriptures were discovered hidden in a secret cave. Ever since Dunhuang has become world famous.

The Story of Dunhuang

Article & Photos by Xie Guanghui



City Symbol – A Tang Dancer

Dunhuang is a very small city covering only three square kilometres, a mere speck on the vast Gobi Desert. During the Han and Tang dynasties, this tiny oasis was once a pivotal point of interchange between China and the outside world, a major staging post for both incoming and outgoing trading caravans. As one of the important towns on the famous 7,000-kilometre Silk Road starting from Chang'an, crossing Asia, and ending in Rome, the city symbol is not a camel, as many people think, but a sculpture of a young female dancer plucking the pipa on her back. It is a replica of one of the images found in Cave No. 112 of the Mogao Grottoes. An image representative of the high Tang Dynasty, the girl has a full figure, and is sculptured in graceful dance demonstrating the romance on the ancient Silk Road.

Treasure Cave Discovered by a Taoist Priest

The Mogao (Desert High) Grottoes are the highlight of Dunhuang and one of the highlights of Northwest China. Located 25 kilometres south-east of Dunhuang, they consist of 492 caves in the 1.5-kilometre cliffs at the eastern foot of Mingsha Mountain. The caves are connected by "heavenly bridges" and are numbered from the north to the south and then back in a "Z" shape. The Daquan River passing by the Mogao Grottoes is already dry, but the rows of white birch trees in front of the cliffs have formed a protective windbreak like guards.

The story goes that in 366, Lezun, a wandering monk, was inspired by the vision of 1,000 Buddhas and cut the first cave into the sandstone cliff face. Over the next 10 centuries Dunhuang became a flourishing centre of Buddhist culture on the Silk Road. By the period ruled by Wu Zetian (r. 690-505) of the Tang Dynasty there had been more than 1,000 caves. It was thus called Thousand Buddha Caves. When Dunhuang became occupied by Xixia tribes in the Northern Song Dynasty (960-1127), the monks of Mogao Grottoes sealed large amounts of cultural relics in the Cave No. 17 before they fled. As time passed, the cave was abandoned and eventually forgotten.

By the end of the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911), a Taoist priest Wang Yuanlu moved into the Mogao Grottoes. One might think it strange to have a Taoist priest living in a Buddhist temple but in fact, Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism were a little mixed up by the end of the Qing Dynasty. Religious believers not only worshipped Sakyamuni, but also the Most Exalted Lord Laojun, and when they fell sick they prayed before the God of Medicine Tathagata and also made sacrifices to the Jade Emperor for Longevity.

The monk came to the Mogao Grottoes to get away from his famine-stricken hometown in Hubei. The story goes that after he had finished smoking his pipe he would strike it on the cave walls to remove the ashes. One day he noticed the sound was different – it seemed hollow. He then began to dig at the wall. On the other side, he discovered a small cave stuffed full of ancient books, engraved blocks, paper paintings, silk paintings, religious instruments and sacrificial objects dating from the Wei (220-265), Jin (265-420) to early Song (960-1279). Priest Wang had no idea that he had discovered a real treasure trove. He took a few rolls of Buddhist scriptures to the county magistrate who gave orders to seal the cave to stop the contents falling into the hands of invaders.

Huge Amount of Relics Exchanged for a Few Silver Coins

In 1907 Sir Aurel Stein heard of the hoard, tracked down the monk and was allowed to inspect the contents of the cave. What he found was an archaeological gold mine of Buddhist texts in Chinese, Tibetan and many other central Asian languages, some known and some long forgotten. There were paintings on silk and linen, and what may be the

oldest printed book in existence.

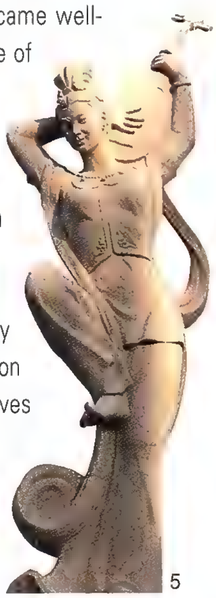
At first, Priest Wang showed hesitation at giving anything away from the caves for fear of offending the god. But reportedly Stein tricked him by saying that he himself was a worshipper of Monk Xuangzhuang and he had followed the pilgrimage route of the Tang Monk from India to China. Wang, though a Taoist priest, was also a worshipper of Xuangzhuang. He was so excited to meet a foreign worshipper of the Tang High Monk that he agreed immediately. Stein convinced Wang to part with a large section of the library in return for four silver coins. The sacking of the caves began in earnest. He carted away 24 packing cases of manuscripts and five cases of paintings, embroideries and art relics. In 1914, Stein revisited Dunhuang. Again, with a few silver coins, he took back with him five big trunks containing 600 volumes of Buddhist sutra. Back at home, Stein was granted the title of knight by the British Royal Family in reward for his extraordinary collection of Dunhuang relics for the British Museum.

Westerners Scrambled for Treasures

In February 1908, a more dangerous person appeared at the Mogao Grottoes. He was Paul Pelliot of France. Stein did not know Chinese and had to rely on his assistant Jiang Xiaowan. Paul Pelliot was a Sinologist. He could not only speak fluent Chinese but had a better understanding of the ancient Chinese culture. During the three months that he stayed there Pelliot personally selected about 5,000 valuable relics. Before leaving China, he held an exhibition in the International Hotel in Beijing to display part of the Dunhuang treasures. This was a heavy blow to Chinese academic circles. In 1910, news of the find filtered through to the Qing government in Beijing, and the imperial court ordered the remainder of the collection to be transported to the capital. Ironically, many items were robbed by Li Shengze, the court official who made the original suggestion of the removal. He secretly ordered his own men to steal a large quantity of the cultural relics on their way from Dunhuang to Beijing. The relics which reached Beijing were only a small part of what had been shipped. But the disaster of the Mogao Grottoes had no end even after all the treasures were removed.

In 1921, some defeated Belarus troops fled to the north-west of China after the October Revolution in Russia. The fatuous Chinese government allowed them to live in the Mogao Grottoes where they lived for half a year, smoking and cooking food inside the caves. The resulting oil and smoke damaged the world-treasured murals.

Warner was a relative late comer in the sacking of Chinese cultural relics compared with his Western counterparts. When he arrived at the Mogao Grottoes in 1923, all the Buddhist scriptures and ancient books had gone. So he aimed for the murals and sculptures. He used a special kind of glue to peel off 26 murals and stole two fine sculptures. One of them was the famous half-kneeling donator Bodhisattva from Cave No. 328. A small gallery in Harvard University became well-known for its oriental collection simply because of this Buddhist sculpture.



5

Chang Shuhong, the God of Protection

Sadly, today specialists of Dunhuang have to buy microfilms of the Dunhuang collections from foreign museums in order to do their research work. The scholars of Dunhuang Research Institute do not condemn Priest Wang nor do they want to express their feelings or pass comment on what happened. Instead they immerse themselves in their work on research and the preservation of the Dunhuang Grottoes. The most respected of them was Mr. Chang Shuhong, the first director of the institute. When he was studying in France in 1935, he saw by chance a photographic album entitled *Dunhuang Pictures* edited by Pelliot in a second-hand bookstore on the banks of River Seine in Paris. From that moment on he devoted his life to the protection and research of the Dunhuang arts. In 1946, he led the first group of researchers to Dunhuang and planted rows of white birch trees in front of the Mogao Grottoes to protect the highly-exposed caves from the elements. They then set about cleaning out the dust and sand from all the caves before numbering them. They researched and made reproductions of the donators, Flying Apsaras and other historical figures in the murals to provide an academic basis for the study of Dunhuang arts. As a result, the Dunhuang Research Institute is now the world's largest and most complete academic research centre in the study of Dunhuang arts.

Chang Shuhong was buried opposite the Mogao Grottoes on Sanwei Hill. The local people regard him as the God of Protection of the Mogao Grottoes.

Translated by M.Qiang

1. **Cave No. 96, known as Big Buddha Cave, has nine layers and is the highest of the Mogao Grottoes. It is also considered as the symbol of Mogao Grottoes.**
2. **The 492 caves honey-comb the 1.5 km-long cliffs at the eastern foot of Mingsha Mountain.**
3. **Today, most researchers rely on photographs for reproducing the Mogao murals.**
4. **The show hall of the Dunhuang Grottoes Protection and Research Institute displays a series of excellent reproduction of the Mogao art works.**
5. **The image of the Tang dancer found in Cave No. 112 has become the symbol of Dunhuang City.**

The Treasures of Dunhuang

Photos By Wang Miao Text by Chen Yat Nin
Captions compiled by Yee ket Cho

The Mogao Grottoes of Dunhuang attract thousands of people from around the world with its remarkable murals and sculptures. Who could have imagined that the construction which began 1,500 years ago in the 4th century would create such a wonderful treasure trove of Buddhist art unrivalled in the world.

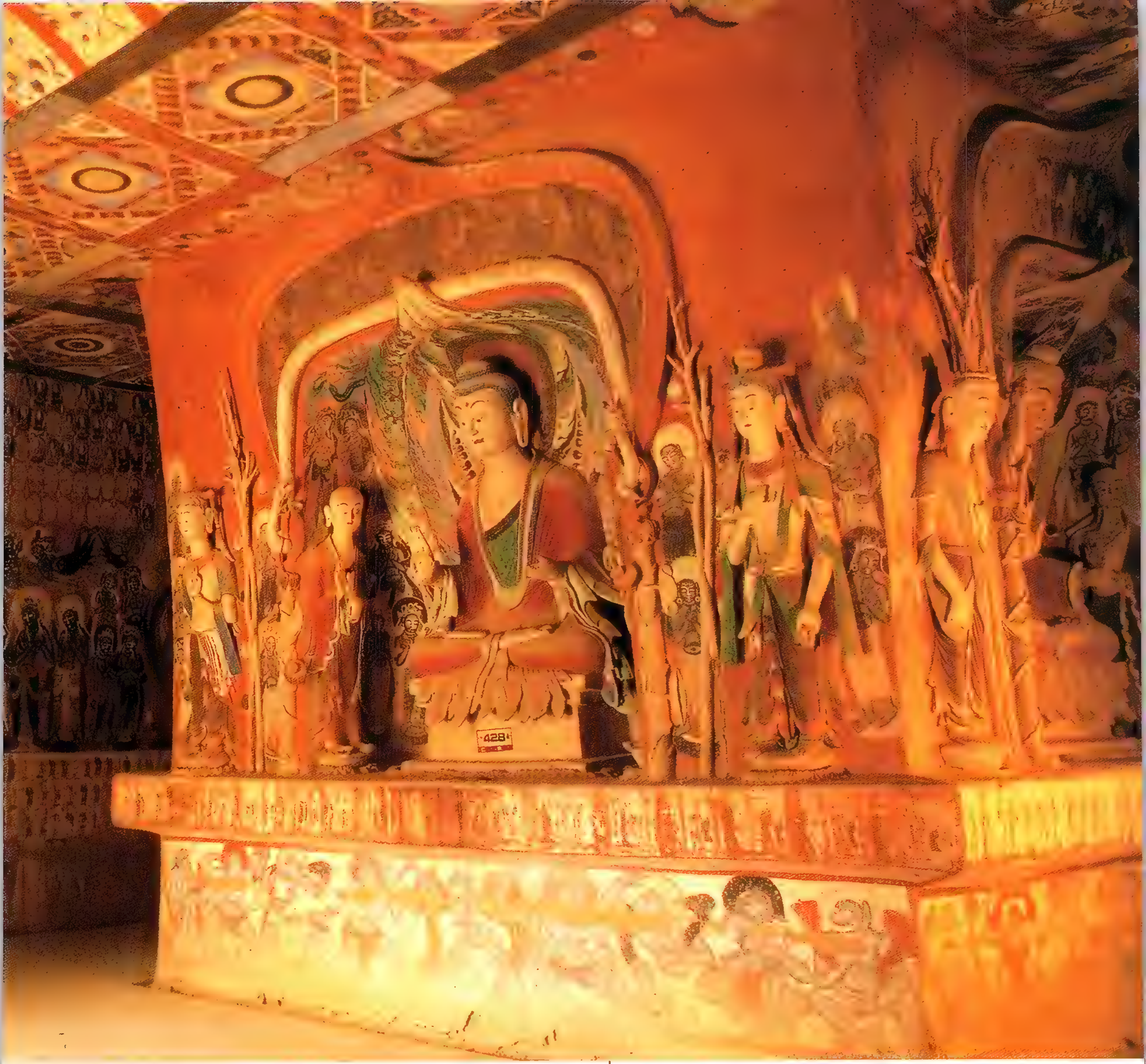
Originally there were a few thousand caves, but unfortunately the area is highly exposed to the elements and the erosion of wind and water have severely damaged most of the caves. Today, only 492 grottoes are still standing. Altogether they contain 2,415 statues and over 45,000 square metres of murals. This is still an astonishing figure, making it the largest grotto art museum extant in the world. It is much different from the other two famous grottoes in China – Yungang Grottoes in Datong of Shanxi and Longmen Grottoes in Luoyang of Henan.

The Dunhuang art works can be generrally classified into two periods with the Sui Dynasty as the "dividing line". The art of the earlier periods is characterised by its attempt to depict the spirituality of those who had achieved enlightenment and transcended the material world through their asceticism. In the later periods the themes became more representative of day to day life in the human world rather than in the Buddhist world and artists painted the Bodhisattvas, Flying Apsaras, dancers, musicians, worshippers and donators based on real models, making them extremely vivid.

The caisson ceilings in Dunhuang grotto architecture are mostly painted, thus "Wooden beams and brackets" are not constructed but painted, and the caisson ceilings are magnificently decorated with Flying Apsaras, auspicious clouds and figures in heavenly stories.

The Dunhuang sculptures, though not as brilliant as the murals, are also unique and excellent. As the sculptures are mostly made of clay and painted in colour, they are much more exiquite and lifelike compared with those stone carvings found in other grottoes.

This huge art museum was created by generations of artists, but none left their name or mark behind. We only know the names of some of the grotto-opening organisers and donators. The earliest initiator was Monk Lezun who cut the first cave in 366, the second was Monk Faliang who opened the next cave. After that, many officials and commoners donated money to have caves cut in their name in the hope that they might be protected by Buddha during their lifetime and later enter the Buddhist eternal world after death. After the unification of China in the Sui Dynasty, especially during the Tang Dynasty (618-907), the state became more prosperous, so it became popular among people to build grottoes. The nobilities, officials and gentry were very



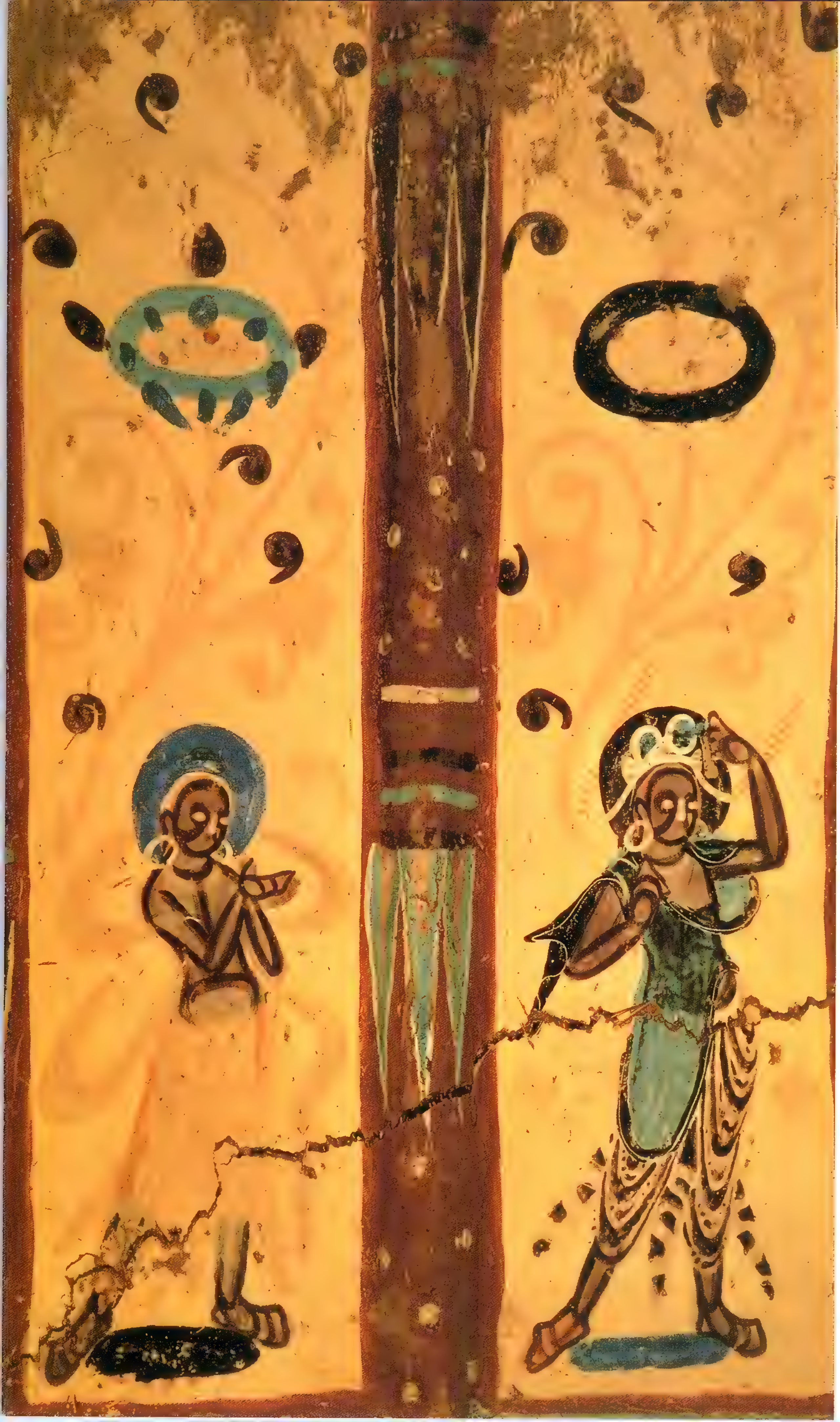
willing to have grottoes built to express their sincere belief in Buddhism. They also commissioned artists to paint their images into the murals, with wording such as "so and so donates and worships". From the images of these donators, we can guess that these were people with power or wealth, or both, who attempted to show off their high social status in the murals. Some of the smaller caves were commissioned by low-status donators. Cave No. 107, for example, has inscriptions beside the image of the donators saying "giving up our old way of life and turning over a new leaf". The donators were a group of prostitutes who expressed their pitiful and lowly wishes to the Buddha.

Unfortunately, we will never know the names of the great artists, but every visitor to the caves marvels at their craftsmanship.

Translated by M.Q

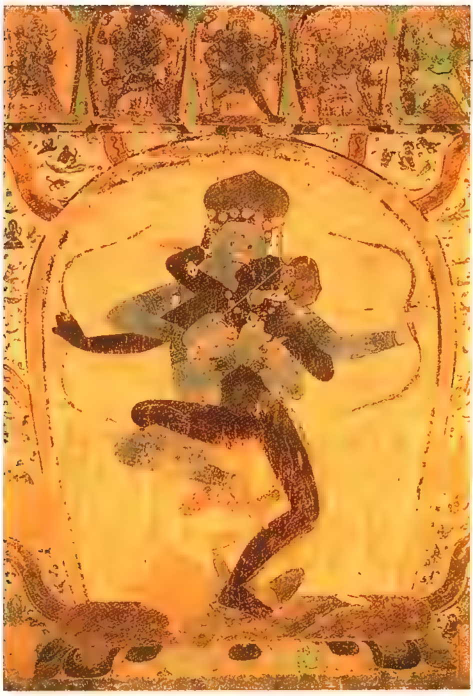
Cave No. 428

Built in the Northern Zhou Dynasty (557-581). During this period, cultures from the Chinese central plains and the western regions became highly blended, bringing about new artistic features, as typified by this cave. The major cave chamber has a flat chessboard-like top with garble draping, which is painted with the most outstanding murals in all of the Dunhuang caves. The central pillar cave stands side by side with the hall cave. The sculptures all have delicate features, yet they are somewhat smaller and their proportions are not very accurate. The murals were meticulously done and attention was simultaneously paid to both the line drawings and coloration. The picture-story-book method was adopted. The murals on the four walls are divided into four tiers: The first tier is composed of 962 carved pictures of Buddha; the second tier is made up by five groups of pictures; the third tier contains more than 1,200 portraits of the donators.



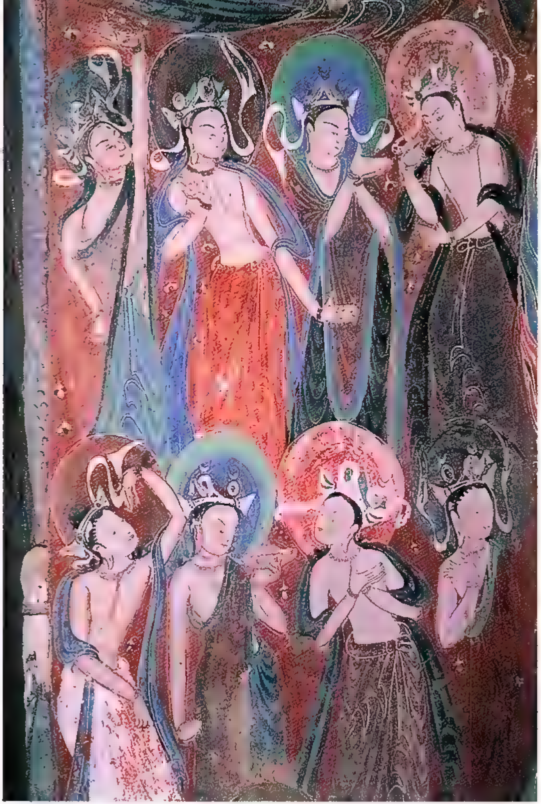
Cave No. 263

This cave was built in the Northern Wei Dynasty (386-534). Cave art of that period reflects the influences of external factors and art of the central plains were both assimilated on a large scale, thus giving rise to a style characteristic of the time. In mural painting, the colouring is basically done with a method associated with the western regions. The colour gradually thins out inward from the contour lines of the human figures, thus producing a three-dimensional effect. Because of their age, the colour has turned black, and the images now seen in the murals are seemingly all drawn with thick black outlines. Therefore, some people concluded that murals created at that time are "bold and unconstrained". In fact, they looked completely different from what people see today. Nevertheless, from these murals people can perceive the painting style of the Western Regions.



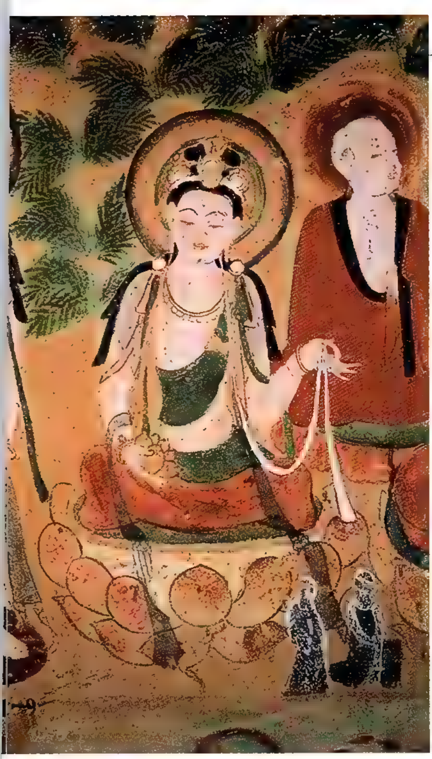
Cave No. 465

A cave specially built for Tibetan esoteric Buddhism during the Yuan Dynasty, it has a front and rear chamber. In the front chamber are unfinished paintings of Bodhisattvas and a pagoda. On the four walls of the main chamber are eight murals of mandala and sutra stories derived from Tibetan esoteric Buddhism. One section shows a male and female embracing each other.



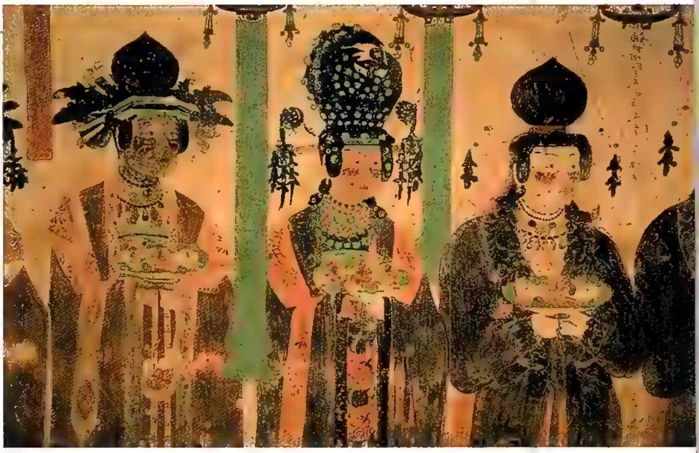
Cave No. 285

This cave is well-known for having the richest and most exquisitely executed murals created in Western Wei Dynasty (535-557). Moreover, it is a typical cave dedicated to Chan Buddhism. On the northern wall inside the cave are eight sutra-elucidating paintings in which there are images of both Bodhisattvas and donators. More often than not, the Bodhisattvas only wear pearl or jade necklaces and draping cloaks. Smiling cheerfully, they appear to be very strong though somewhat slim and lean. Their loose costumes look extremely beautiful with broad sleeves and richly coloured ribbons. The images of the donators were drawn carelessly and lack individuality as many appear to be the same. This, however, does not mean there are no outstanding pieces.



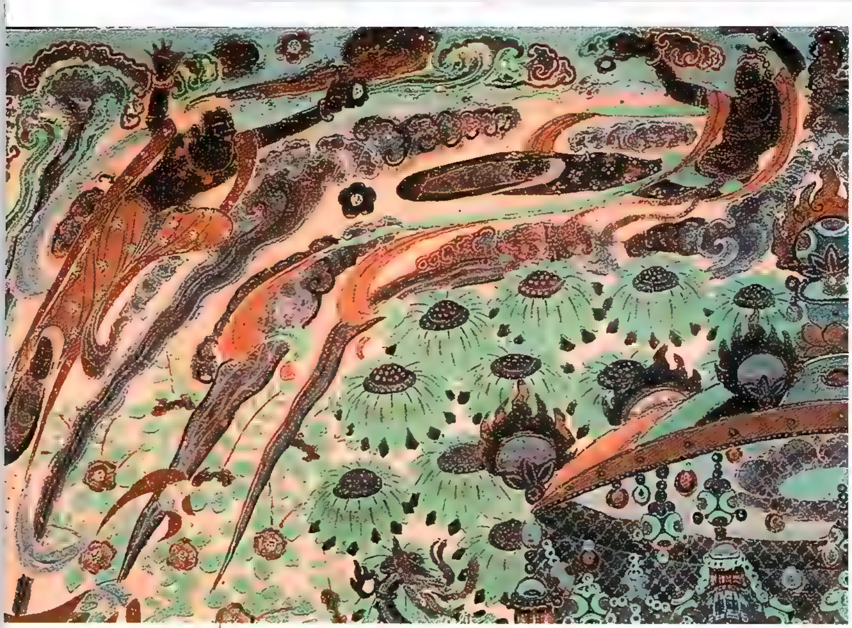
Cave No. 322

This cave was carved in the early period of the Tang Dynasty (618-907). The image of the Bodhisattva on its eastern wall manifests the aesthetic value of the time. Here, the artist was extremely adept to show the quality, softness or hardness of the fabrics of the costume, the pearl necklace and ribbons of the Bodhisattva even making it possible for people to perceive their transparency. Although the paint of the skin has faded and turned blackish, her poise and elegant air still possess the charm of a young woman.



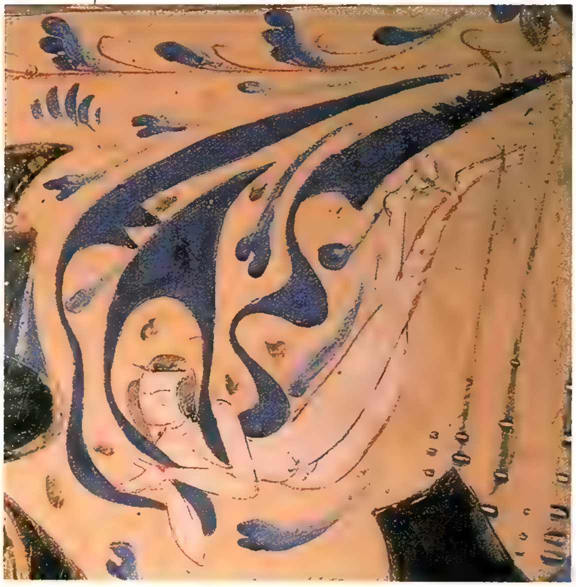
Cave No. 61

Commonly known as Manjusri Hall, this is a "grotto of meritorious service" built by Cao Yuanzhong, son of Cao Yijin who was once commander of the Guiyi Army stationed in areas west of the Yellow River in the Five Dynasties (907-960). Portraits of the Cao wives and maidservants are splendidly attired as well as in a style appropriate for women of aristocratic families at that time. The female images all face inward and stand in a line according to their seniority and position in the family.



Cave No. 285

Dug during the Western Wei Dynasty. These early flying Apsaras are mostly of male images. The artists rendered vividness to the images with bold yet simple lines. Amid floating clouds, the Apsaras appear to be very agile and fly with great ease. They serve as an example of the painting style in the Western Wei Dynasty.

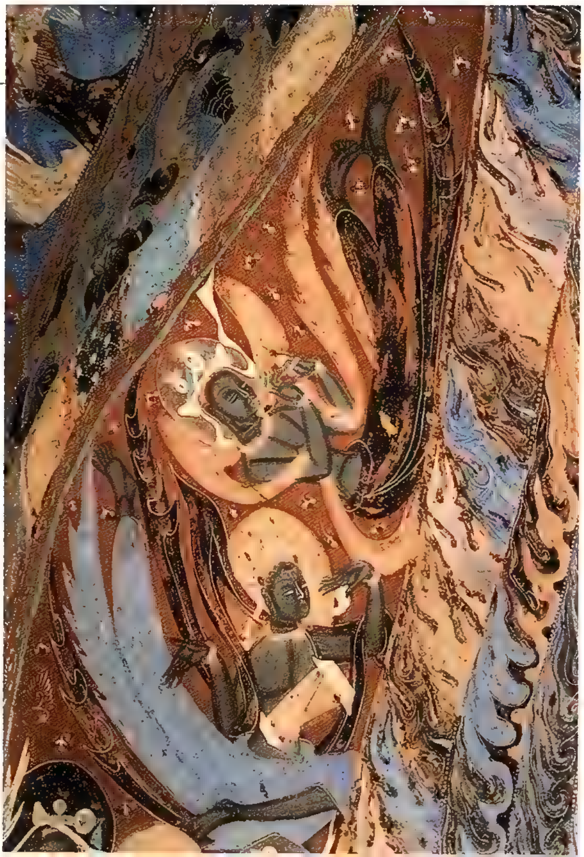


Cave No. 320

Above the mural based on the "Pure Land Story" are two pairs of flying Apsaras. The Apsara in front turns her body backward while flying forward; holding flowers in hand, she looks as if she is scattering them or teasing the Apsaras following, who stretches out her arms and glides forward with all her might, seemingly wanting to catch up with the one in front. The cloud patterns and the contrast between the leisurely composure of the leading Apsaras and the forceful posture of the rear help to greatly enhance the artistic appeal of the mural. Moreover, the images of the human body are well proportioned, the poise is extremely graceful and the patterns on the clothes are well executed. This mural is an outstanding representative piece of all twin Apsaras drawn during the Tang Dynasty in the Mogao caves.

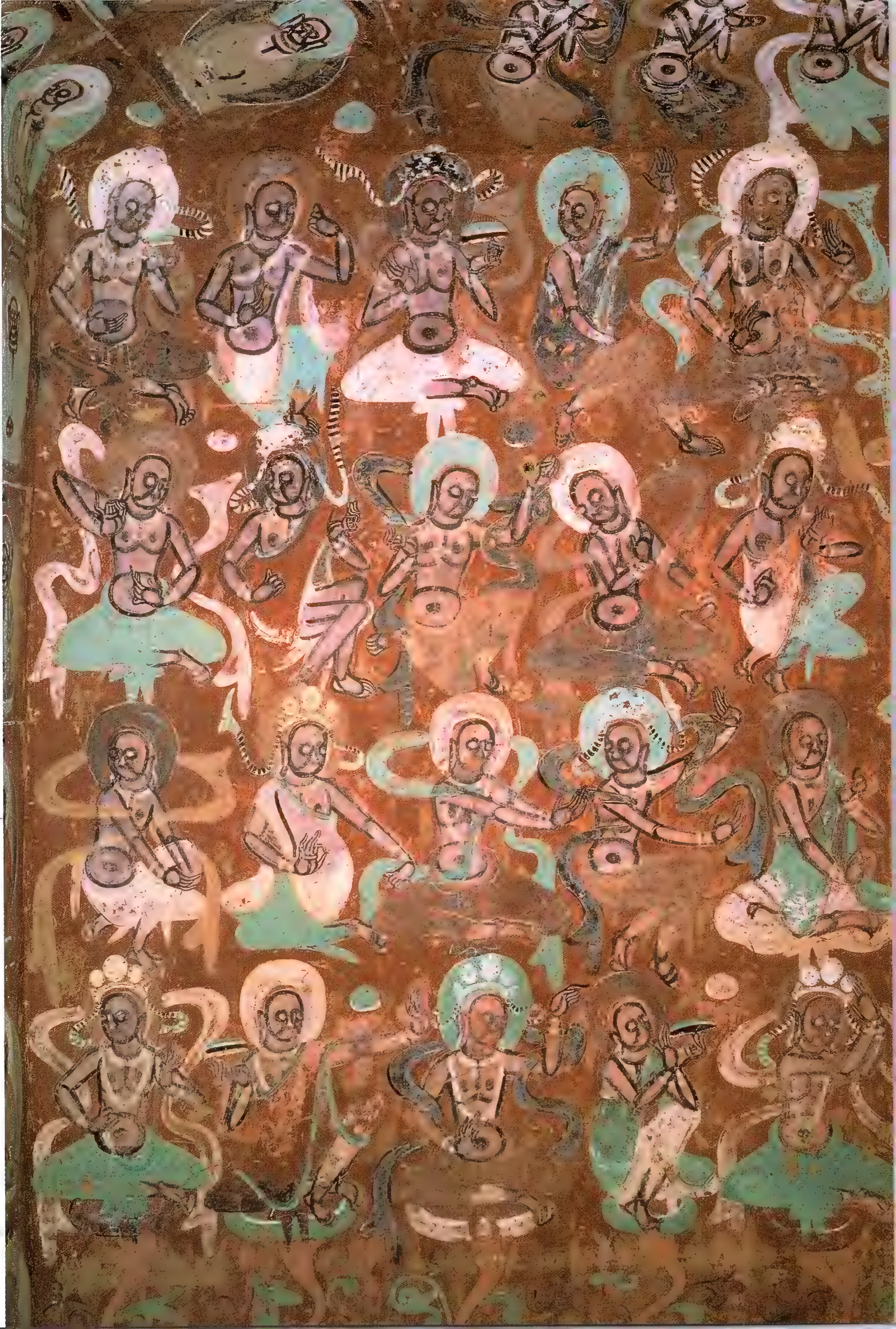
Cave No. 249

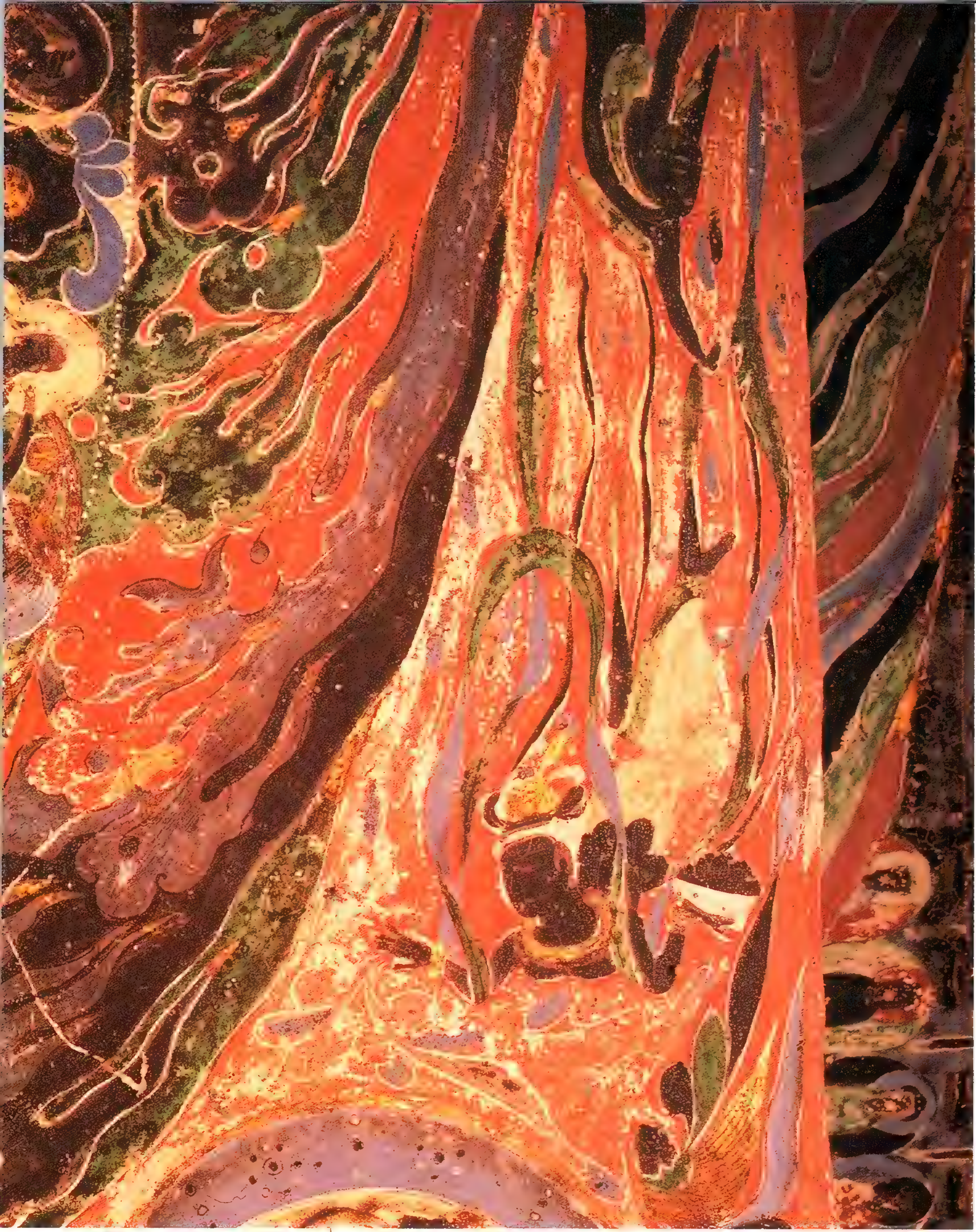
This cave is a good example of all caves built during the Western Wei Dynasty. On the four walls of the cave are murals of musician Apsaras. Without wings and not riding on clouds, these Apsaras can glide freely in the sky, using their long sleeves to produce wind and scatter flowers in the universe. Of the heavenly Apsaras, some hold pipas, others blow long flutes, others beat waist drums and yet others dance. Their postures vary and look very vivid and lively. The bodies of the Apsaras in this cave look a little bit stiff so that their movement appears to be strengthful.



Cave No. 272

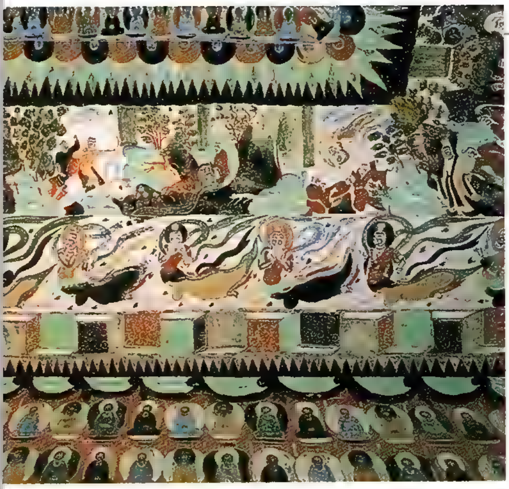
Cut during the rule of Northern Liang State (401-439) in the Sixteen States period, the four walls of the main cave chamber are painted with many images of musician Apsaras, which are representative of earlier works created at Dunhuang. Both the composition and painting technique are very lucid. The varying figures, which are boldly outlined, are simple and almost cartoon-like.





Cave No. 404

This cave was built during the Sui Dynasty (581-618). The paintings derived from Buddhist sutras as well as the decorative patterns are rather typical of murals created in the Sui Dynasty which are usually brilliantly coloured. In the grotto, the shrine lintels are mainly decorated with lotus flowers and musician Apsaras as well as flame-like patterns. The image of the flying Apsaras is graceful, lively and uninhibited. The piece serves to testify to the great vitality of art in the Sui Dynasty.

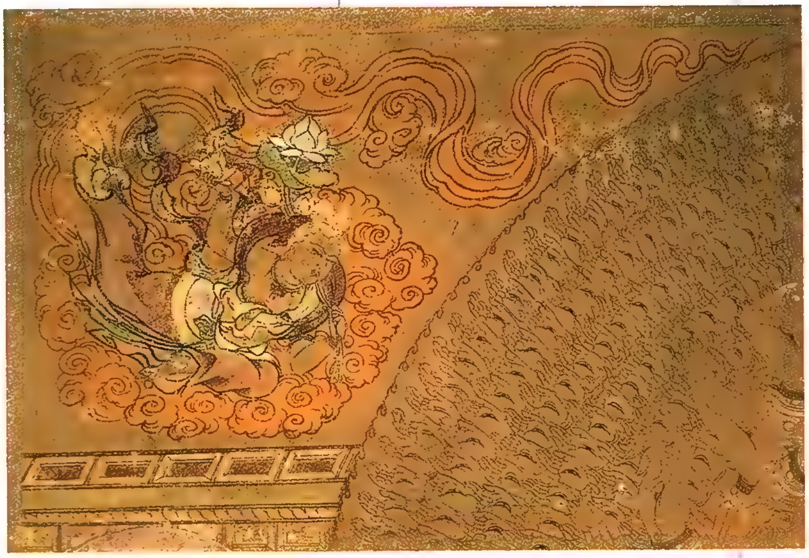


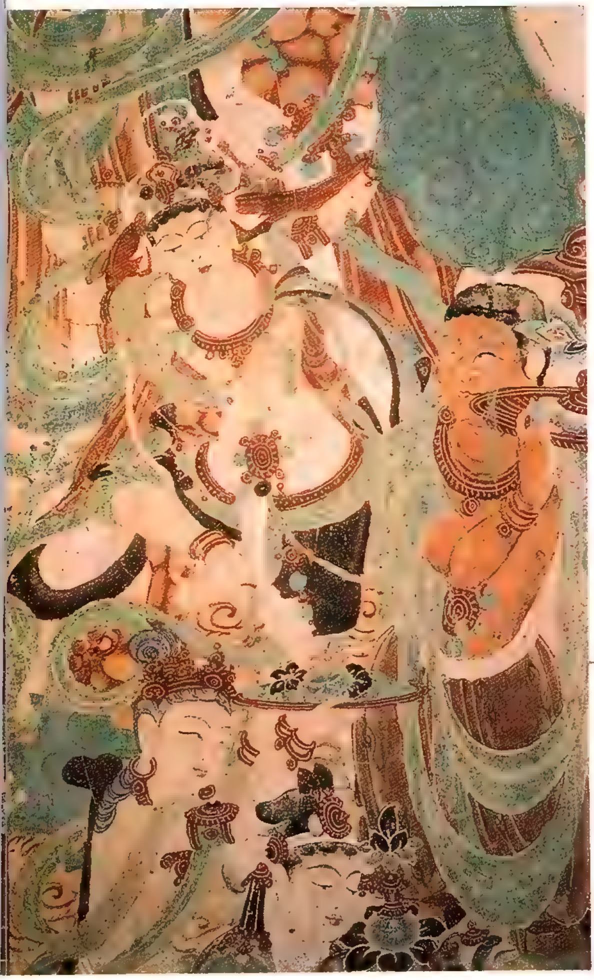
Cave No. 299

This cave was built in the Northern Zhou Dynasty. Making use of the U-shaped concave in its square caisson ceiling, this cave contains murals telling the sutra story "Shanzi Jataka" – starting from both sides, the most exciting part is spotlighted in the most prominent middle section: the king hits Shanzi with an arrow. To create the necessary atmosphere and strengthen the mural's artistic appeal, efforts were made to produce a dynamic depiction of the scene: the king raises his bow, a deer quickly runs away in front of his horse and another turns its head and looks frightened – these form a sharp contrast with Shanzi's leisurely composure of calmly drinking water from a stream.

Cave No. 3

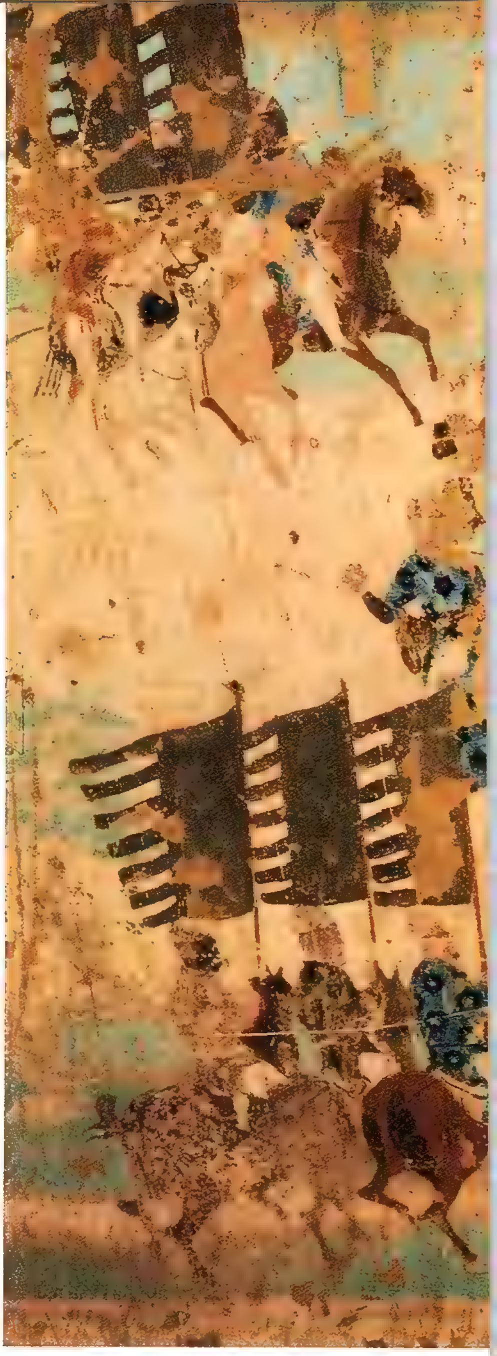
Typical of caves built at the later years of the Yuan Dynasty (1271-1368), this cave is rather small and the murals were drawn with charcoal to show simple yet elegant tone. Nevertheless, the images are of a solemn appearance. The strokes are sometimes round and skilful, and sometimes sturdy and vigorous. The major mural in the cave is the image of a thousand-hand and thousand-eye Goddess of Mercy. The flying Apsaras at the corner looks somewhat different from those created earlier. She holds the lotus bud in one hand and the lotus leaf in the other. Perhaps because the artist paid too much attention to realistic presentation, the Apsaras has lost her abillity to fly. This image shows that at the late stage of the Yuan Dynasty particular attention was paid to realism in mural creation. In terms of painting skill, this no doubt represents a big leap forward. However, the artistic appeal shown in earlier murals has been lost.

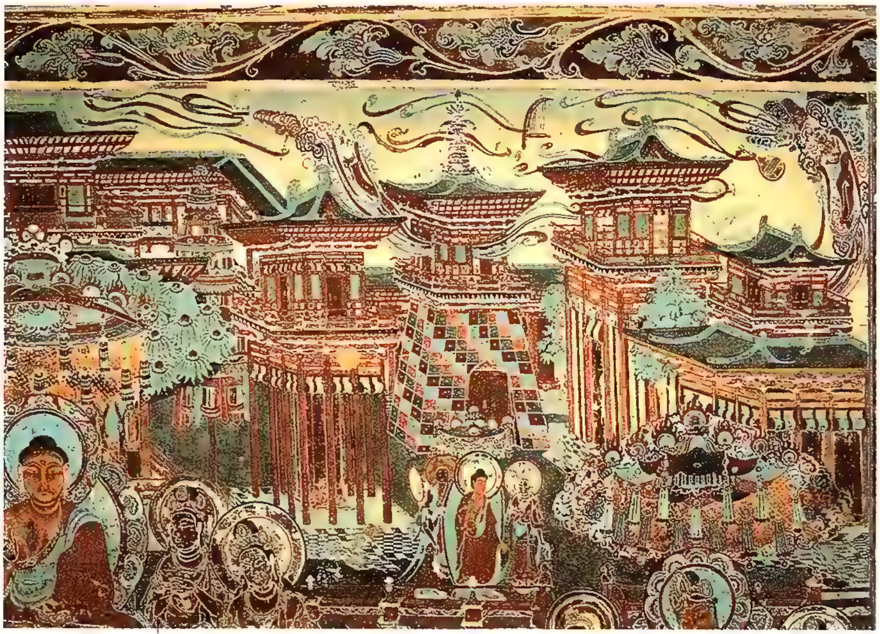




Cave No. 159

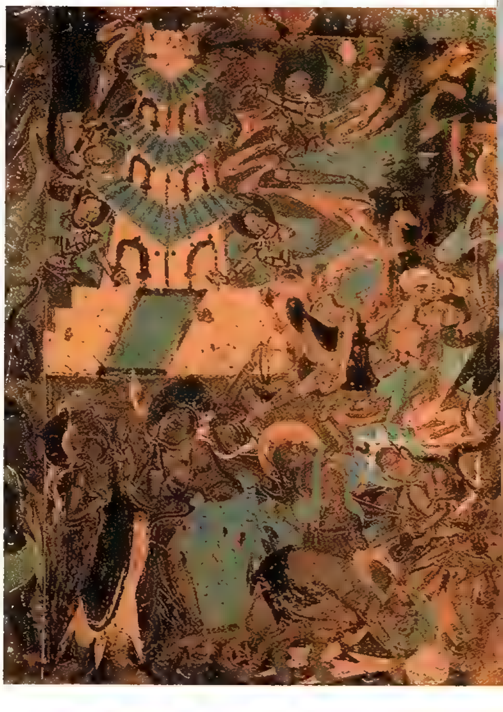
Built by the aristocratic Zhang family at Dunhuang in the middle period of Tang Dynasty, the murals and coloured sculptures in this cave are of high artistic value. The artists must have memorised well the body postures and movements of the human figures – the Buddha, Bodhisattvas and musicians are perfectly presented. Among the images is a dancing girl playing a pipa behind the back. The girl is naked from the waist up, wearing a pearl necklace and holds a pipa with both hands behind the back. Lifting one leg, she appears to be dancing, making the ribbons whirl around her. Graceful and expressive, this figure has become a representative image of Dunhuang Art.





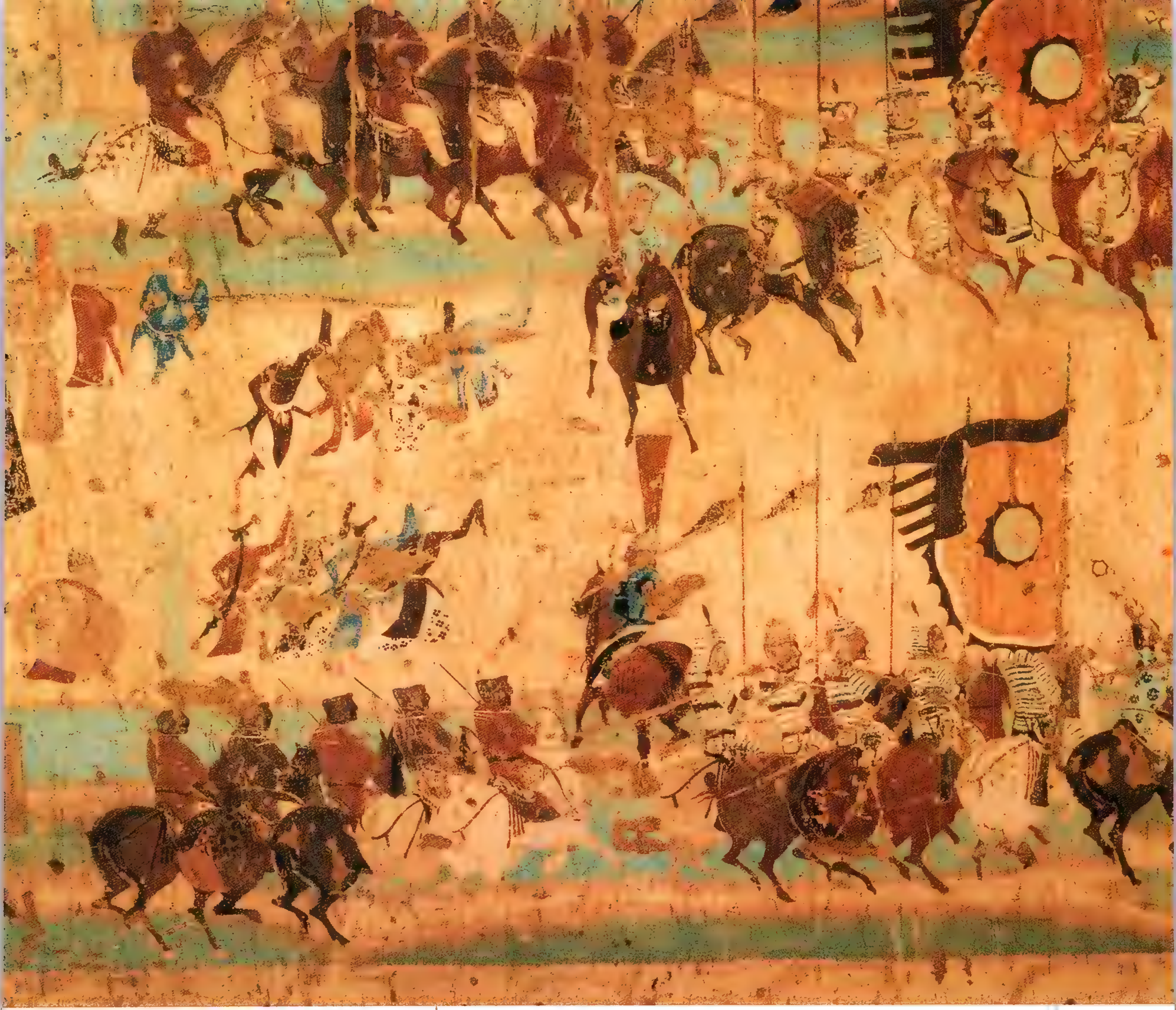
Cave No. 217

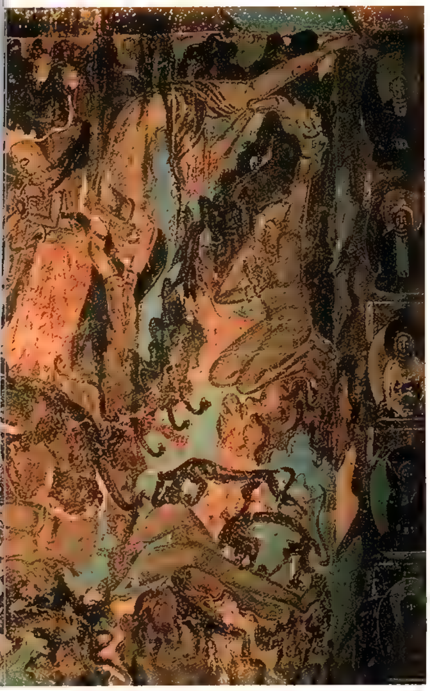
Built in the early period of Tang Dynasty, this is an important cave showing the gradual transformation of mural art in Dunhuang from its early days to its heyday in the Tang Dynasty. The sutra paintings on the north and south walls are outstanding. "The Story from Dhammapata Sutra" is a mural covering the entire south wall. Focusing on the section entitled "Prelude", the story unfolds from left to right, as well as downwards. The section entitled "Nirmanakaya" is one of the best paintings based on the Dhammapata Sutra in the Mogao Caves. The mural covering the entire north wall is called "The Story from Amitayur-Dhyana Sutra". On its upper part is a group of architectures whose design look quite similar to the buildings of Horyu-ji (Horyu Temple) in Japan. It is the most magnificent architectural painting in the Mogao Caves. The lower part is attributed to singing and dancing scenes between the Qibao (Seven Treasure) Pool and the Bagongde (Eight Meritorious Services) Stream.



Cave No. 254

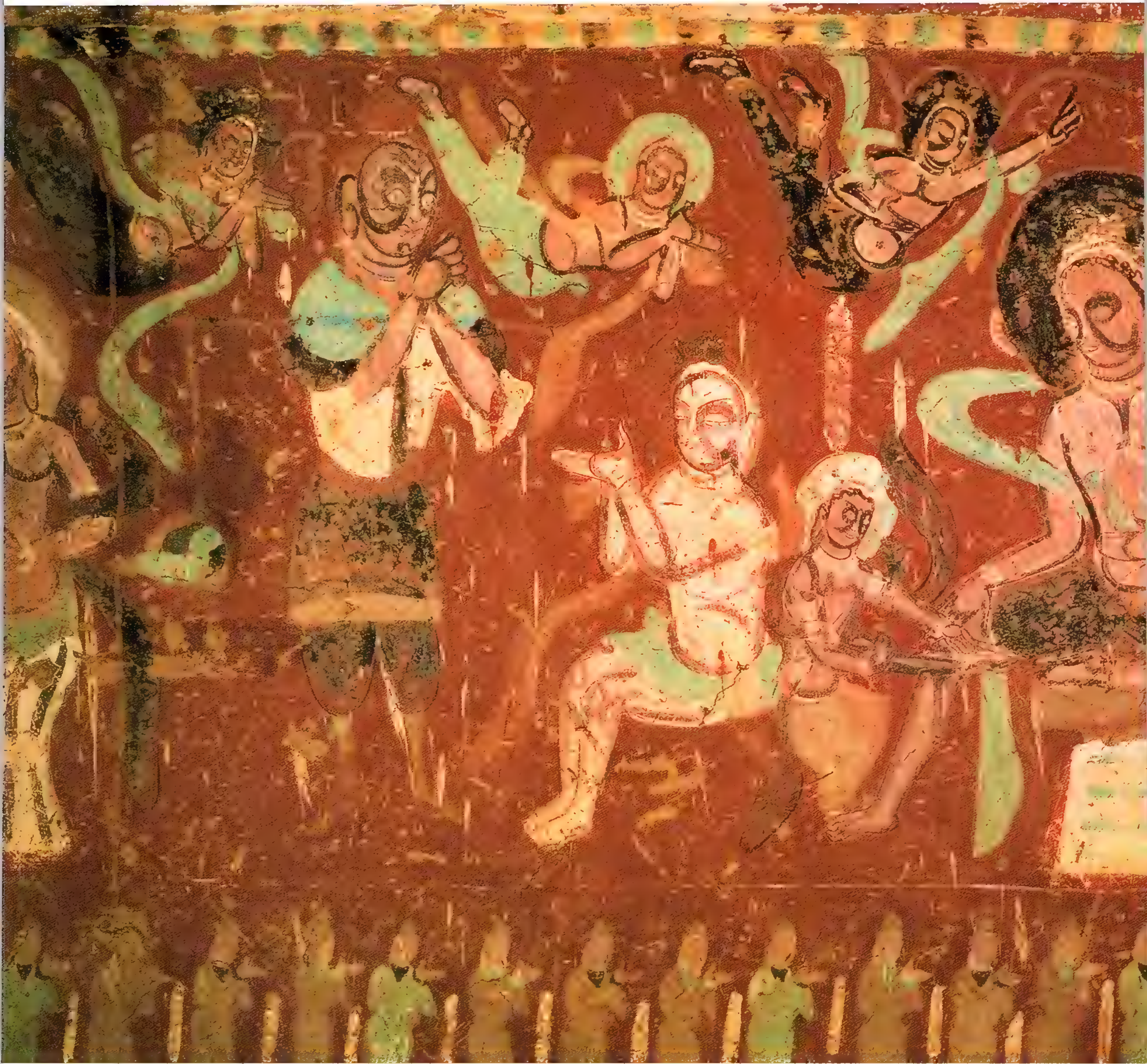
A large cave most representative of caves cut during Northern Wei Dynasty. The most striking characteristic of this cave is that it houses both murals based on the life of the Buddha as well as Jataka paintings. In the middle section of the south wall is a painting based on the story "Indian Prince Feeds a Tiger with His Own Blood". The story says that, once upon a time there were three princes in an Indian kingdom. One day they saw a dying female tiger by a mountain cliff. The youngest prince decided to save the tiger. He cut his own throat and let his blood drip into the mouth of the tiger. Later, his parents collected his remains and built a pagoda to keep them. At the upper left corner, the artist painted a three-storey pagoda. On each side of the pagoda there are three flying Apsaras scattering flower petals onto it, marking the propitious ending of the story. Apart from this, there are three other paintings telling Buddhist stories. Each of the stories is narrated by a single large mural and takes the Buddha as the main character. With skilful composition and rich imagination, all are of the highest quality in single-painting story-telling murals in the Mogao caves.





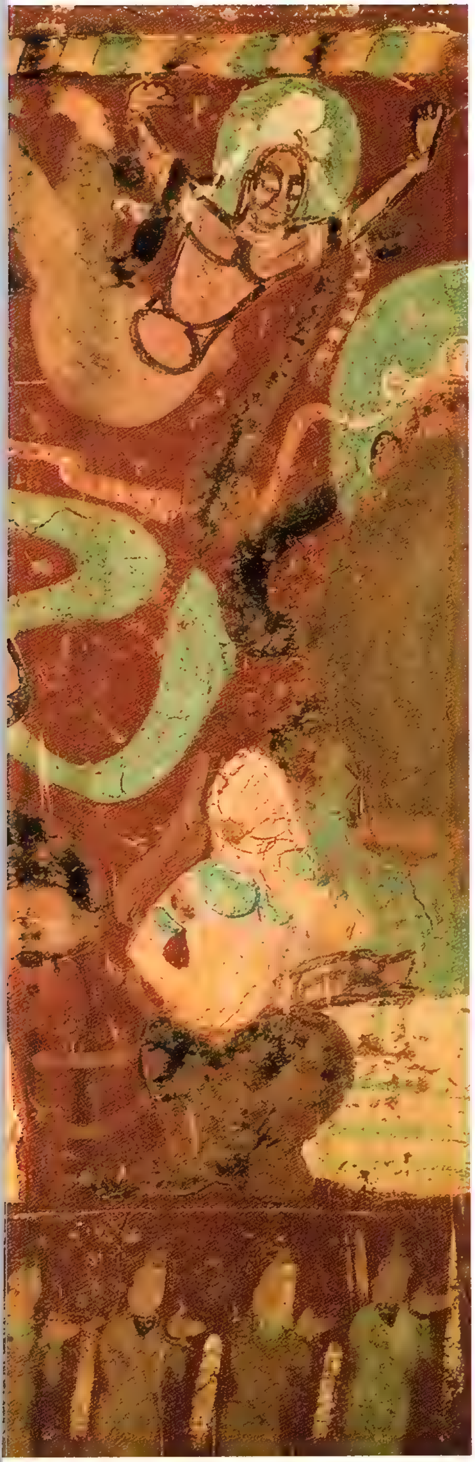
Cave No. 156

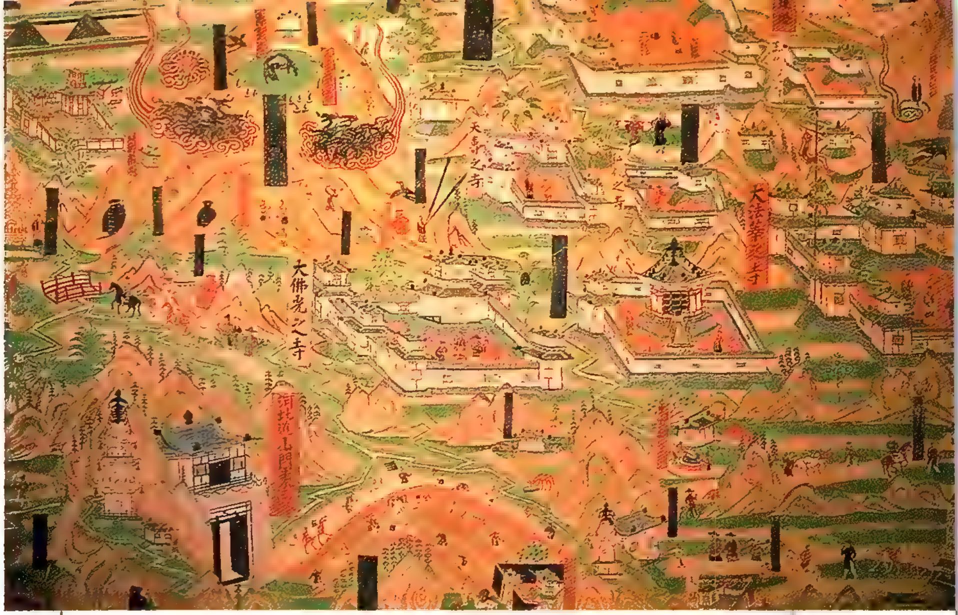
A cave built at the late stage of Tang Dynasty, it is well-known for its rich murals. In the two front chambers are 17 groups of paintings based on sutra stories, which may cover almost all sutra-story paintings in the Mogao Caves. On the south wall is a mural titled "Zhang Yichao Goes on a Journey with His Army". The painting is about one metre high and 8.8 metres long. Represented in it are more than 100 human figures and horses. The scene unfolds from the west: In the front are four pairs of soldiers beating big drums and blowing horns; followed by 10 guards in two columns, each one in the front holding a flag. They all have an impressive bearing – riding on horses, wearing armour, and carrying arrow bags and long spears. It takes Zhao Yichao as the focus, and presents in great detail the mounted guards of honour as well as the musicians and dancers. The grand procession of numerous human figures and horses amid fluttering flags and deafening drums and horns truthfully represents the atmosphere generated when a Tang military commander went on a journey with his army. But meanwhile, the painting is also permeated with a warm and joyous atmosphere.



Cave No. 275

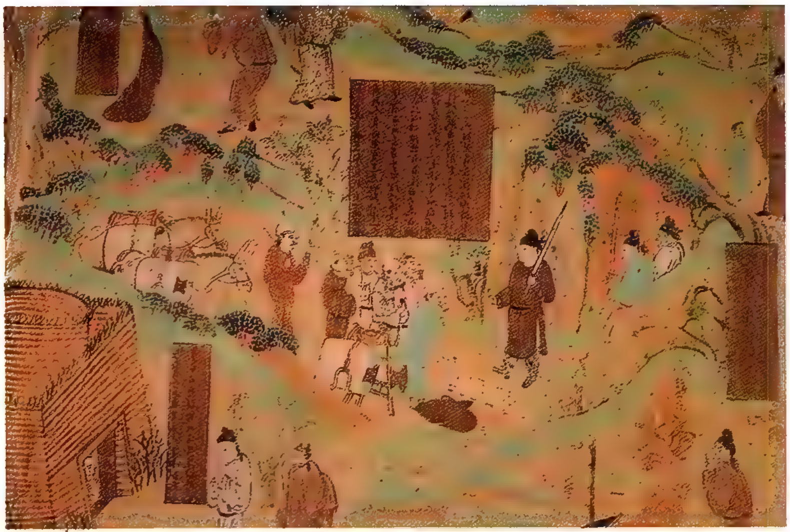
Built in the Northern Liang period (401-439). The story in this cave is about the pre-life of Sakyamuni when he was an ancient Indian king who traded his own flesh to save the life of a dove. This king ruled a rich and powerful kingdom and he himself was a very charitable person. One day he saw an eagle hunt a dove and the dove flew to the king for help. Using this advantage, the eagle asked to eat the king's flesh to preserve its own life. As the king promised to save the life of the dove, and he showed pity to all living things, he cut off his own flesh to feed the eagle. Just then came a thunderous explosion and both the eagle and dove disappeared. It turned out that they were changed from the heavenly king and one of his principal officials to come to test the faith and courage of the king. In the painting, the artist paid particular attention to depicting the generous king. His head tilts forward slightly, showing both benevolence and courage.





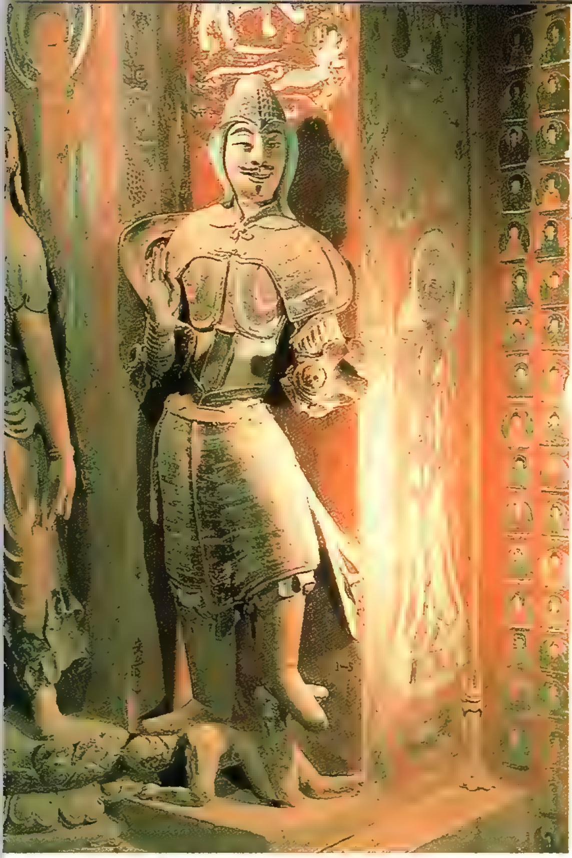
Cave No. 61

Built in the Five Dynasties period (907-960), this cave is renowned for the gigantic mural entitled "Map of Wutai Mountain" on its west wall. Some 13 metres wide and 4.6 metres high and totalling 60 square metres in size, it is the most ancient and largest topographic map so far known throughout the world. Marked in the mural are the topographic features of mountains, rivers and plains as well as urban and rural roads in an area with a radius of 250 kilometres – equivalent to the distance from Taiyuan in Shanxi to Zhengding County in Hebei. In the mural, mountains rise and fall, roads criss-cross, and temples and monasteries dot here and there, with merchants, tribute envoys and monks running through them.



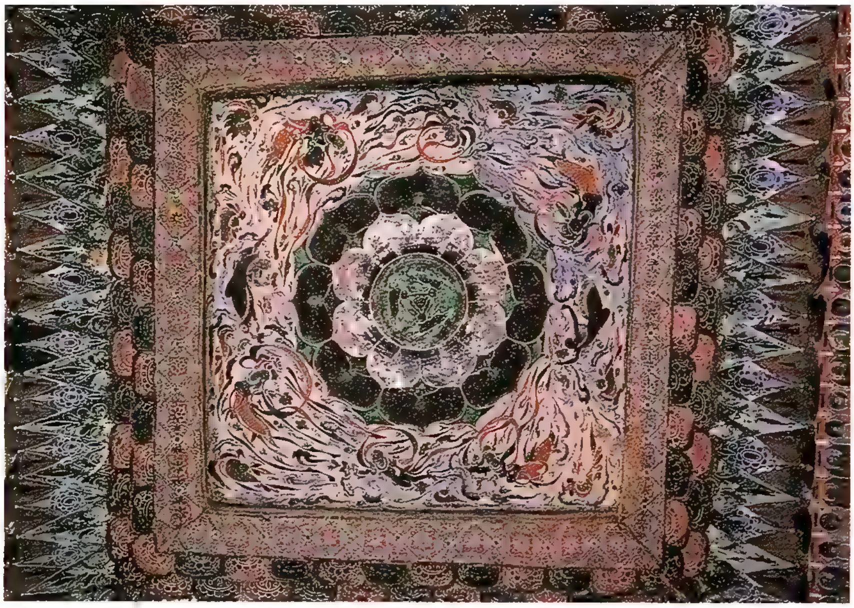
Cave No. 45

A cave cut in the Tang Dynasty in its heyday. On the south wall is a mural based on a story from the "Avalokitesrava Sutra". In the mural a team of Central Asian merchants and their donkeys are stopped by a group of bandits with knives in hand. The merchants have a frightened, imploring expression on their faces. This vivid picture gives a full indication of the hardships endured by the merchants. It is an excellent Dunhuang mural telling stories of the traders along the Silk Road.



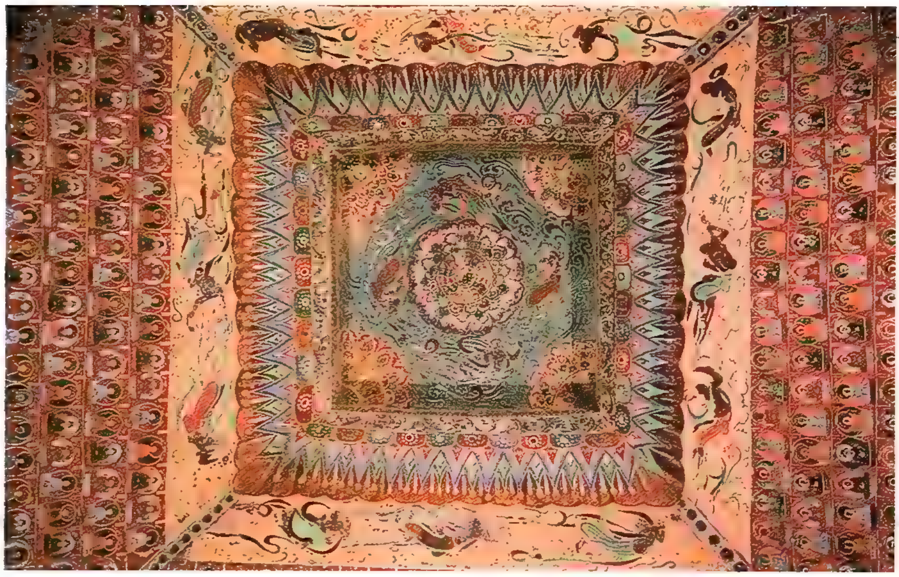
Cave No. 322

Carved in the early period of the Tang Dynasty, this grotto contains sculptures of powerful men and heavenly kings as well as murals. By each of the northern and southern walls of the front chamber are two of the so-called Four Heavenly Kings who, in the world of Buddhism, are the guardians of the four directions. The heavenly kings in the cave wear heavy armour and carry Buddhist instruments, each holding a devil under foot. Compared with the Vidjra Devas, they appear calm and victorious. The coloured sculptures created in the Tang Dynasty are very realistic, suggesting that the artists must have created the sculptures of Bodhisattvas and heavenly kings based on their observations of generals in real life, thus making the celestial beings acceptable to the audience. Moreover, the superb craftsmanship of the artists rendered these Buddhist beings more lifelike.



Cave No. 407

Like other caves built during the Sui Dynasty, it contains richly coloured and meticulously designed patterns, particularly the caisson ceilings. A gigantic eight-petalled lotus flower has been drawn in the centre of this caisson ceiling. In the centre of the flower, three hares chase each other in a circle. Flying around the lotus flower are eight Apsaras. The four walls of the ceiling are painted with lotus flowers, diamond patterns and draping curtains. This "three-hare and flying Apsaras caisson ceiling" has combined movement with stillness; it is rich in colour and meticulous and vivid in representation. The mural is an outstanding piece of ancient decorative art.

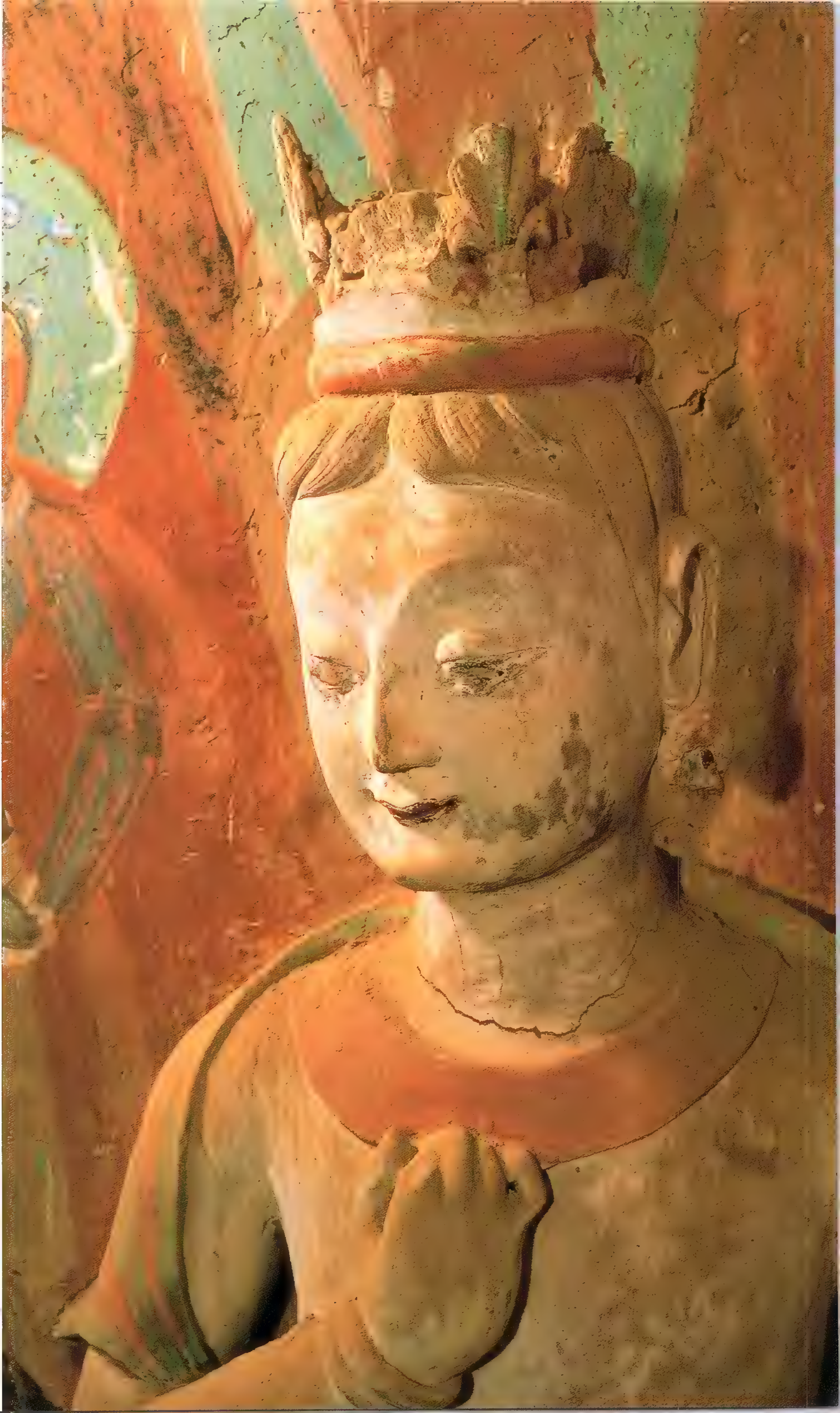


Cave No. 329

Dug in the early period of the Tang Dynasty. In the middle of the caisson ceiling on the top of the main cave chamber is a lotus flower in full blossom painted against a lightly coloured blue base. Flying around the lotus flower are four Apsaras in various postures; their long sleeves and ribbons fly in the wind. On the outer ring of the ceiling are 12 flying Apsaras, holding and playing different musical instruments.

Cave No. 420

Built in the Sui Dynasty. On the west wall of the cave there is a round niche, which houses the sculptures of one Buddha, two disciples and four Bodhisattvas; and on the northern and southern walls there are smaller square niches for sculptures of one Buddha and two Bodhisattvas. The three groups of coloured sculptures are exemplary pieces of the Sui-dynasty style – the human figures are full and round and solemnly poised. The Bodhisattvas have wide shoulders and slim waists and are well-proportioned, and the facial contours are clearly lined. The technique adopted to present the costumes is simple and effective: The blue and green colours forms a contrast with the overall basic earthen red colour of the mural, producing an obvious decorative effect. On the southern side of the outer layer of the niche on the west wall is a coloured sculpture of Bodhisattva holding a willow branch. With a height of 2.43 metres, it is one of the best colour sculptures from the Sui Dynasty.



Translated by Li Zhenguo

TOURIST TIPS FOR THE MOGAO GROTTOES

Transport

As a tourist city Dunhuang has a convenient transport system including a bus station, railway station and airport. All the tourist spots in Dunhuang are fairly concentrated. The Mogao Grottoes are located 25 kilometres to the south-east of Dunhuang. Mini buses operate between the grottoes and Dunhuang but there is no fixed timetable; it leaves whenever it is full. Taxi fares are quite reasonable - 70 yuan (Xiali car) or 100 yuan (Santana car) from Dunhuang to Mogao Grottoes and back (including waiting time).

The Mogao Grottoes attract tourists from all over the world.

Altogether there are more than 100 hotels, inns and hostels in Dunhuang. Three-star hotels include Dunhuang Guesthouse, Dunhuang Mountain Resort and Dunhuang International Hotel whose rate per room is between 300-500 yuan. Other rooms are available elsewhere for around 100 yuan for middle grade rooms to 40-50 yuan for standard grade rooms.

Replicas of the historical Buddhist art works can be bought at street stalls in Dunhuang.

Important Information

The best season to visit Dunhuang is between July to September when temperatures are hot during the day but cool in the evening. The Mogao Grottoes open at 8 a.m., and morning is the best time to visit since it is brighter. There are two ticket prices: Chinese pay 58 yuan and foreigners pay 85 yuan. Not all the caves are open to visitors. Visitors with regular tickets can only visit a dozen caves. If you want to see some of the state-protected caves you have to pay extra — 200 yuan per cave per person. If you find this too expensive, pay a visit to the exhibition hall at the Dunhuang Grottoes Protection and Research Institute opposite the Mogao Grottoes which houses excellent replicas of the murals.

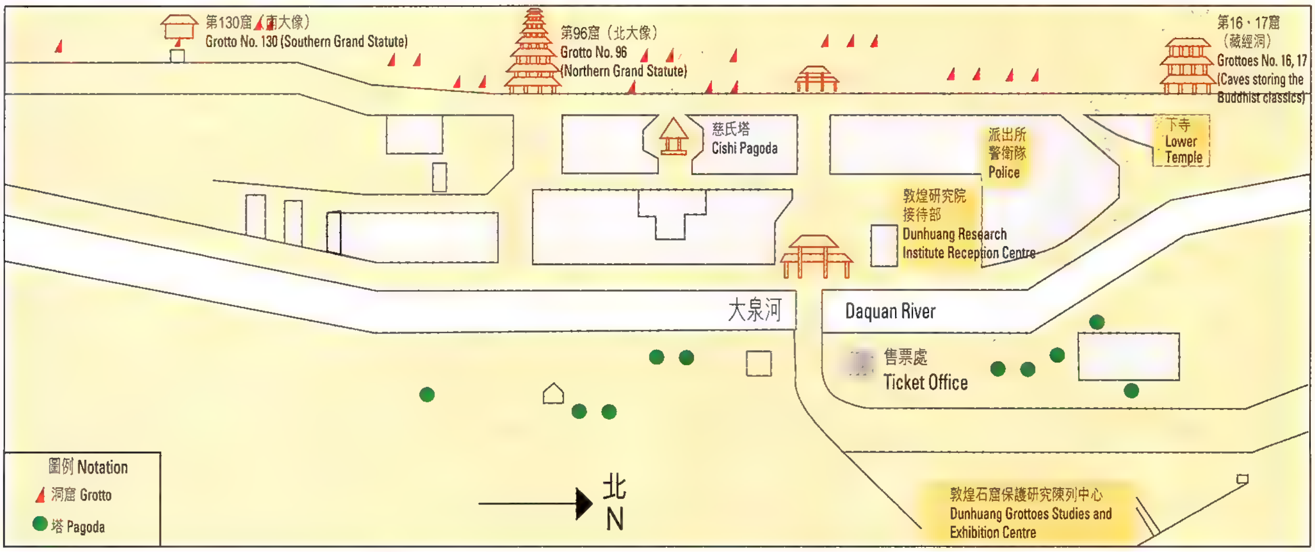
Cameras and camcorders are not allowed inside the caves. You are required to leave them, and handbags, at the entrance. On the tour you will be led by a guide from the institute, who opens each cave for you in turn and then locks it again after you. It is not possible to have your own free time to wander around. The light inside the caves is very dim and are illuminated only by the guide's torch. If you would like to have a closer look, rent a torch from the booth where you buy the ticket. It is quite cool inside the big caves, so it is advisable to take a jacket or a coat. There are no exhibit plaques to read so it is very difficult to establish the dates of the murals and sculptures. We recommend that you buy a book on the Mogao Grottoes. The best one, entitled *General Catalogue of Mogao Grottoes in Dunhuang,* provides a lot of background information on the caves.

In order to protect the murals, no lights are installed inside the caves, therefore, visitors need to use a flashlight.

Translated by M.Q.

莫高窟遊覽區示意圖

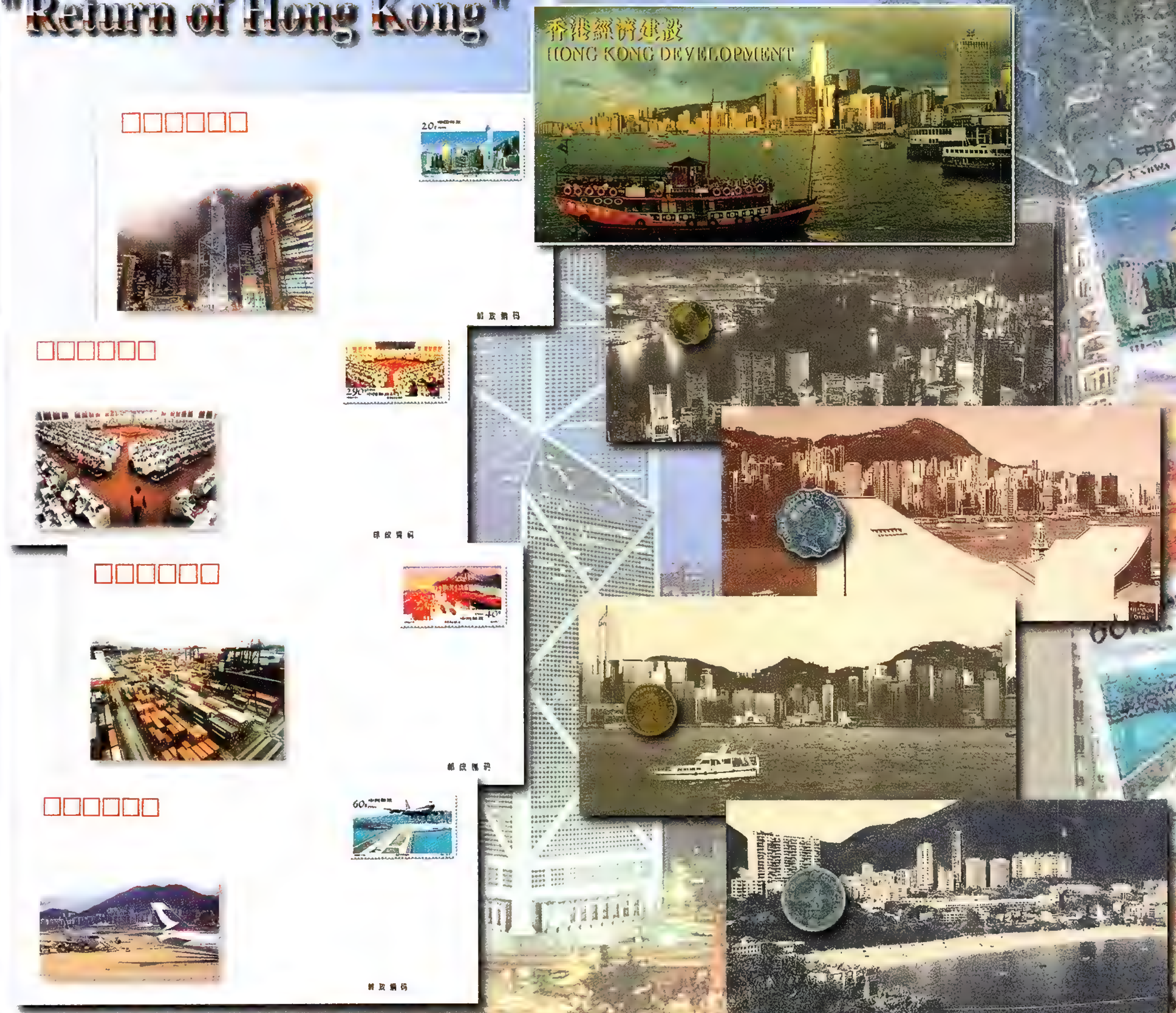
Sketch Map of Mogao Grottoes


第130窟（南大像）
Grotto No. 130 (Southern Grand Statute)
第96窟（北大像）
Grotto No. 96
(Northern Grand Statute)
第16、17窟
（藏經洞）
Grottoes No. 16, 17
(Caves storing the Buddhist classics)
慈氏塔
Cishi Pagoda
派出所
警衛隊
Police
下寺
Lower Temple
敦煌研究院
接待部
Dunhuang Research Institute Reception Centre
大泉河
Daquan River
售票處
Ticket Office
圖例 Notation
洞窟 Grotto
塔 Pagoda
北
N
敦煌石窟保護研究陳列中心
Dunhuang Grottoes Studies and Exhibition Centre

"Hong Kong Development" Commemorative Cover

The second in the series

"Return of Hong Kong"



Following the success of the first issue in the series entitled "Scenic Hong Kong", a set of commemorative postcards jointly issued in 1995 by the Hong Kong China Tourism Press Ltd and People's Post and Telecommunications Press Ltd, the two press work together again this year to produce a set of Coin-inlaid Commemorative Covers.

Entitled "Hong Kong Development", the second in the series, this set of Coin-inlaid Commemorative Covers bear postage stamps created by famous stamp designers Mr. Yan Bingwu and Mr. Huang Li; the photographs are the work of Hong Kong's famous photographer Mr. Tchan Fou-li. Four cards are inlaid with the 20 cent, 50 cent, 1 dollar and 2 dollar coins bearing the Queen's head, which are gradually being replaced by coins bearing Hong Kong's new emblem - the Bauhinia flower.

On 19th December 1996, 30,000 sets of serial-numbered commemorative covers were issued simultaneously in Beijing and Hong Kong.

A set can be yours for the price of HK$70 per set (plus postage); or US$9 per set (plus postage). Cheques should be crossed and made payable to Hong Kong China Tourism Press Ltd.

Enquiry Hotline: (852) 25618001

Hong Kong Development (Limited Edition)
A Series of Postal Stationery
Return of Hong Kong '97 (Second Series)
ORDER FORM

Name:________________ I.D. card/Passport no.: ________________

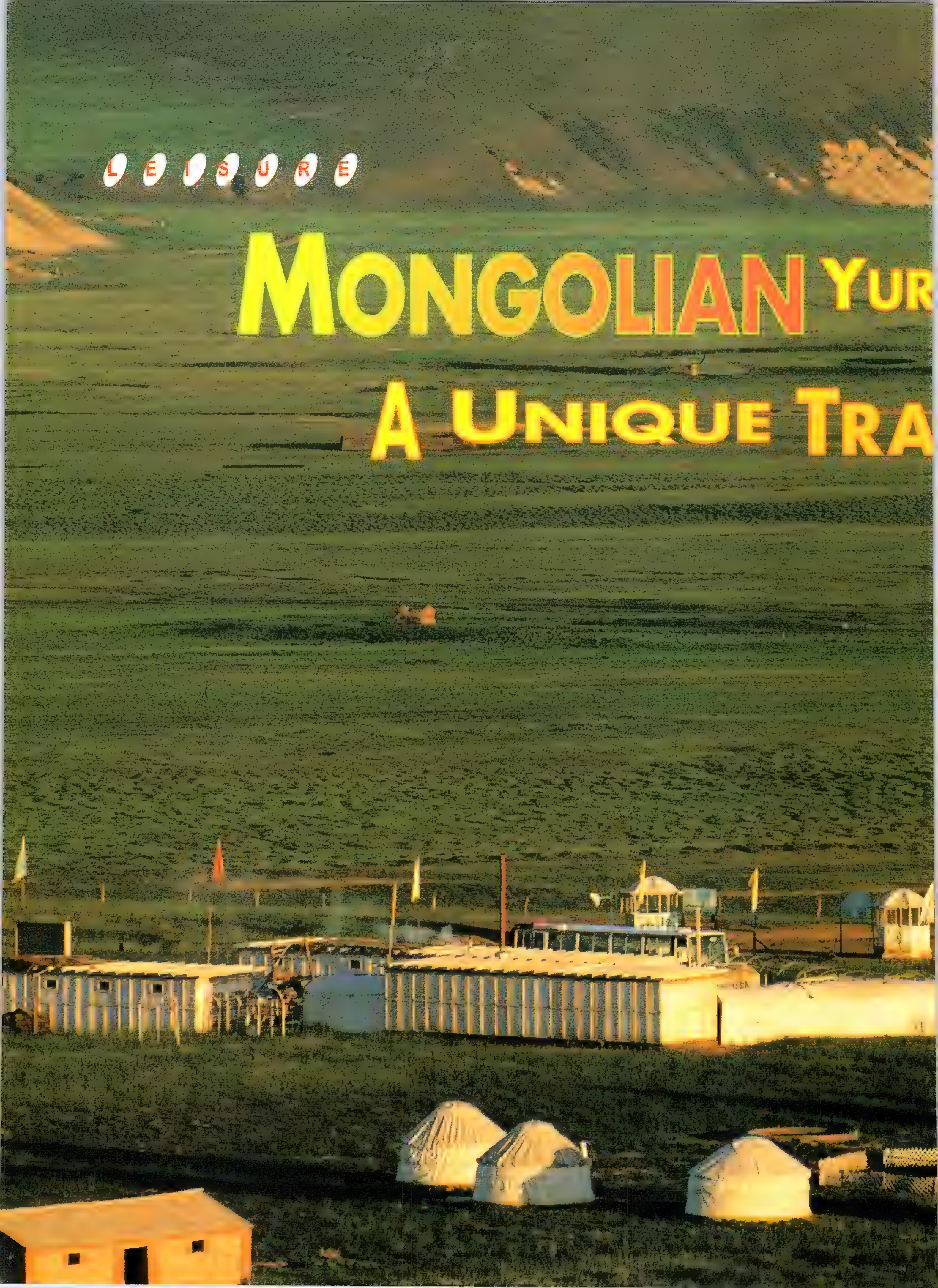
Delivery Address: ________________________________

________________ Tel:____________ Fax: ____________

Sets	Tick (✔)	Local (HK$)			Tick (✔)	Overseas (US$)		
		Price	Postage	Total		Price	Postage	Total
1		60	20	80		8	4	12
2		120	20	140		16	4	20
3		180	22	202		24	4.2	28.2
4		240	24	264		32	4.4	36.4
5		300	26	326		40	4.6	44.6
6		360	28	388		48	4.8	52.8
7		420	30	450		56	5	61
8		480	32	512		64	5.2	69.2
9		540	34	574		72	5.4	77.4
10		600	36	636		80	5.6	85.6
11								

MONGOLIAN YUR

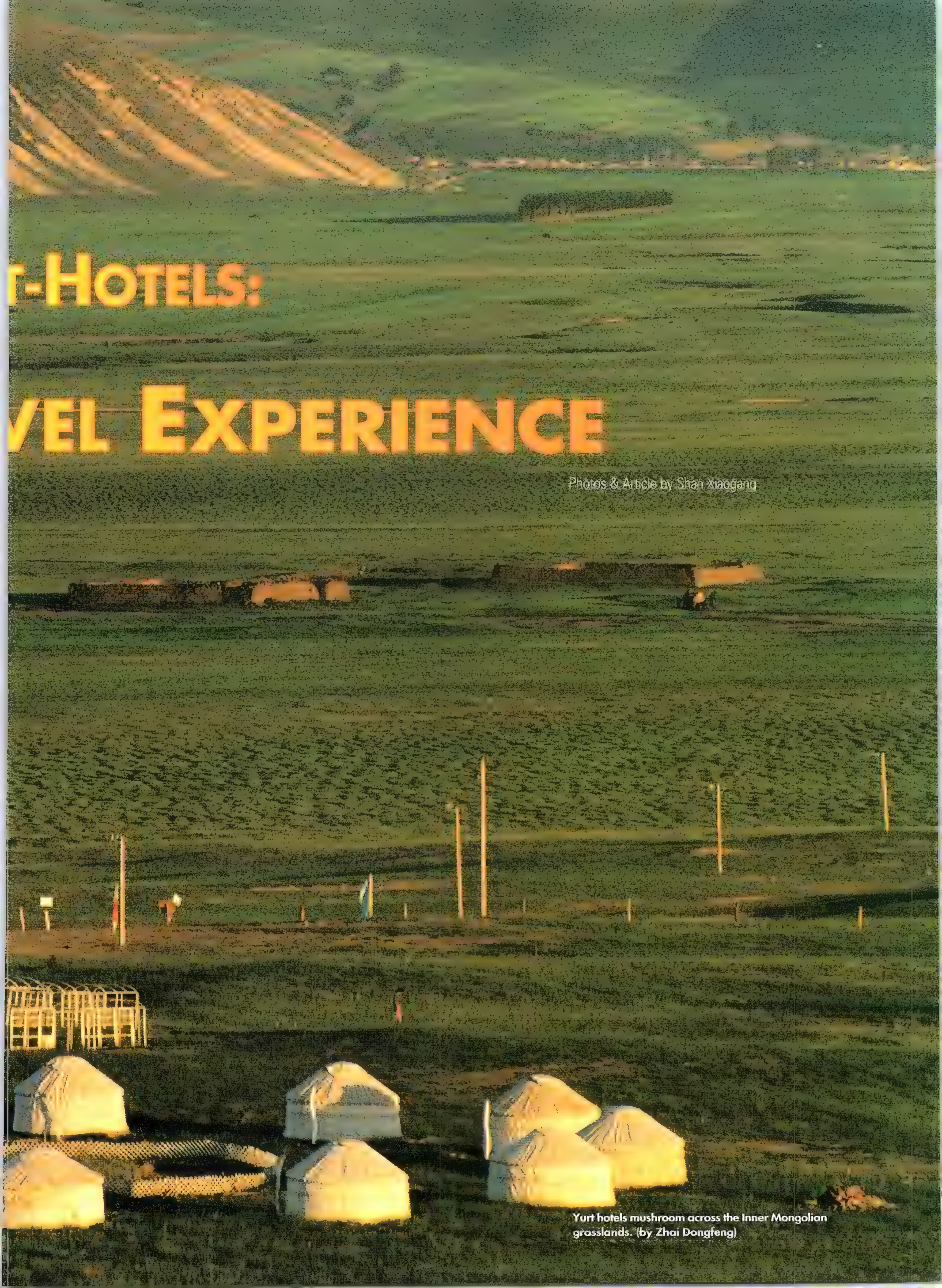
A UNIQUE TRA



T-HOTELS:

VEL EXPERIENCE

Photos & Article by Shan Xiaogang

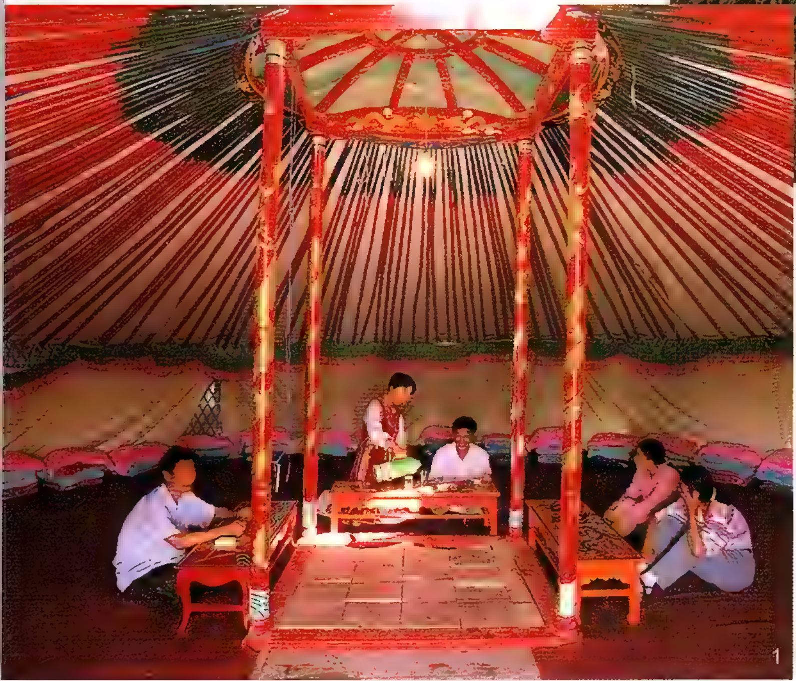


Yurt hotels mushroom across the Inner Mongolian grasslands. (by Zhai Dongfeng)

Looking down through the aircraft window on my way to Xilinhot, I saw what looked like precious stones imbedded in a vast emerald tapestry. Glistening in the sunshine on the vast Inner Mongolian steppes these spherical dots were in fact yurts belonging to Mongolian nomads. As I gazed down longingly at the yurts my imagination transported me inside one of them – where I would soon be a resident, albeit temporarily.

Overnight at a Grassland Summer Resort

The day following my arrival at Xilinhot I drove south-east to the Bayanxile Grassland Nature Reserve and checked into the summer resort situated by the Zakstai Lake. The resort, which is only open for the summer, is a hotel composed of traditional Mongolian yurts. After dinner I entered the yurt which had been assigned to me to settle myself down for the night. When I blew out the candle, I found myself complete enveloped by the dark night.



Around midnight it began to rain hard and the silence of the outside world was shattered by a devil's tattoo as the rain beat down on the felt yurt. Despite the noise of the elements, I slept soundly thanks to the unusual darkness inside the yurt, and probably the side effects of the liqueur I had drunk at dinner! I awoke to find the sun penetrating through the seams of the yurt, and as I stepped outside I found it was a fine day.

The sky showed no sign of the previous night's rainstorm. The vast grassland was made even more beautiful by being tainted crimson by the glow of the rising sun, and a riot of flowers stretched as far as the eye could see. Fishing boats plied the blue waters on the lake while herdsmen were grazing their cattle and sheep on the moist, fresh grassland.

By noontime, the sun was beating down mercilessly from a whitened sky. I was feeling hot and suffocated by the confines of the yurt. Just then a group of young Mongolian women arrived to remove the felt cover from the sky window and to roll up the lower edge of the walls of my yurt. In an instance, the humidity was gone and the yurt became cool and comfortable again.

I was told that a traditional Mogolian yurt costs only several thousand yuan but it can be used for decades. Easily pitched within an hour and light to carry, it is no wonder that the yurt is so well suited to the lifestyle of the nomadic Mongolians.

Moving into Genghis Khan's Yurt

A few days later we moved on to a summer resort in the Xiritala Grassland near Xilinhot. Here we saw exactly how the yurts were erected. Wooden planks are placed on the ground to form the floor, then thick blankets are spread out and fastened to vertical poles to form an enclosure. Its corners are secured by ropes, fashioned out of horse hair, to pegs which have been driven into the ground. A yurt is ready for occupation when the rooftop and a sky window is hoisted up to the top of the enclosure.

It was a very interesting demonstration.

That evening new tourists arrived in throngs, and we heard that the resort was soon packed to overflowing. The manager of the resort, Mr. Tugmen, asked if we would mind being moved to the golden-domed Genghis Khan Tent as he had no alternative. This tent had a floorspace of 60 square metres! We couldn't understand why he was being so apologetic at having to put us up in such an honorary room! We were overjoyed at the opportunity of being able to luxuriate in the royal comfort of Genghis Khan's residence.

Like eminent guests we entered the tent to find our beds already made up. Before we went to sleep, we had some fun posing alongside a portrait of Genghis Khan. Taking a pair of Mongolian swords down from the walls we jokingly sat either side of him like two of his ferocious guards and had a photograph taken.

The next few days found me lodging in quite different surroundings. In the Gegentala Grassland, we stayed in a brick yurt in the Xiangsha (Humming Sand) Bay in the Kubui Desert. These were yurts constructed of brick walls and a glass-top, a vast difference from the romantic feel of the traditional yurts. My only consolation was that through the glass roof I could see the beautiful night sky glistening with stars under the light of a full moon.

Of all the Mongolian yurts in which I stayed during my tour, the traditional ones were obviously the more authentic and

1. **This yurt at Harsuhai Tourist Centre can accommodate several dozen people.**
2. **There are also European-style wooden cottages at Harsuhai Tourist Centre.**
3. **Modern bathing facilities in the luxury cottages**
4. **Traditional yurts dot the grassland at Harsuhai.**

1. Each with a sword in hand, we pretend to be the guards of the Khan.
2. Service girls in their traditional costumes
3. Japanese students enjoying horse-riding

enjoyable. The yurts built of brick and glass are not much different from modern hotels in big cities, which are complete with tap water, electricity, bathroom and kitchen, not to mention amenities such as air-conditioning and television.

For me, a traveller who tried to escape the busy and noisy city life, having slept amidst the rich verdure of the grassland under the cottony clouds and blue sky was the most unforgettable experience in my life.

Translated by Ling Yuan

TRAVEL TIPS

Today, yurt-hotels and summer resorts have mushroomed on the great steppes of Inner Mongolia and in Hohhot, capital of the autonomous region. The largest of them is found in Gegentala Summer Resort, 128 kilometres north of Hohhot. Built by the Tourist Administration of the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, this resort operates a complex of several dozen yurts, either the traditional felt yurts or that of the modern brick-built style. Similar resorts are found on the Xilamuren and Huitenxile grasslands, 90-135 kilometres from Hohhot. The Saihantala Summer Resort in Baotou is also worth a visit. Another is the Xiritala Grassland Summer Resort which is a nine-square-kilometre affair operating by far the most authentic of all the traditional yurts in Inner Mongolia. As a point of interest, this is the location which featured in the full-length feature film Marco Polo co-produced by China and Italy.

Rates for the Yurt Hotels in Inner Mongolia

Gegentala Grassland Resort:

Traditional yurt: 140 yuan per yurt (accommodates six people)
Standard yurt (with brick walls): 200 yuan per yurt (accommodates two people)
Single luxury yurt: 280 yuan per yurt.

Xiritala Grassland Resort:

Traditional yurt: 200 yuan per yurt (accommodates four people)

Hasuhai Tourist Centre:

Traditional Size-12 yurt: 500 yuan per yurt (accommodates 30-35 people)
Traditional Size-8 yurt: 400 yuan per yurt (accommodates 20-25 people)
Traditional Size-6 yurt: 200 yuan per yurt (accommodates 10-15 people)
Traditional Size-4 yurt: 100 yuan per yurt (accommodates 4-6 people)

Xiangsha Bay Hostel:

Traditional Yurt: 90 yuan per yurt (accommodates six people)

It is advisable to make reservations during the busy tourist seasons, festivals or holidays which can be made through one of the travel services in Hohhot or other cities in Inner Mongolia. Reservations are not required during slack seasons.

Open period: June-September

Locations and How to Get There.

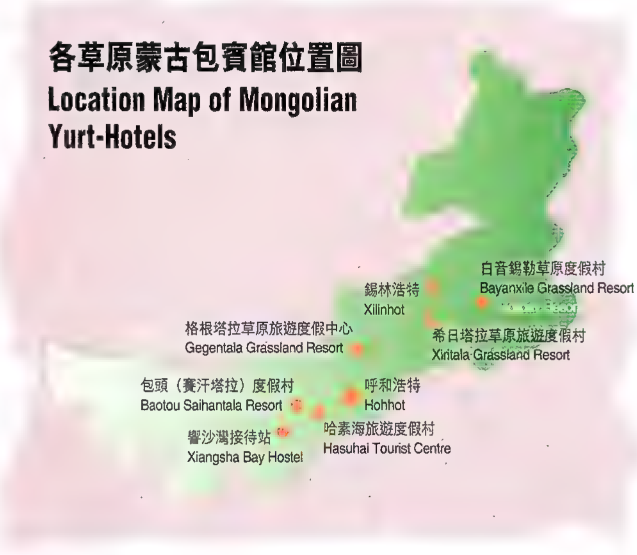
Gegentala Grassland Resort: situated 128 kilometres from Hohhot, can be reached by long-distance bus or taxi. For special travel requirements contact 0474-5448000.

Xiritala Grassland Resort: 15 kilometres south of Xilinhot, can be reached by taxi. For special travel requirements contact 0479-224446.

Hasuhai Tourist Centre: situated 63 kilometres west of Hohhot and 81 kilometres west of Baotou, can be reached by bus or taxi. Reception centres in both cities can arrange transport upon request. Telephone numbers: (Hohhot) 0471-6955070, (Baotou) 0471-5135300 .

Xiangsha (Humming Sand) Bay Hostel: can be reached via bus or taxi as it lies a little more than 40 kilometres outside Baotou.

Bayanxile Grassland Resort: about 60 kilometres to the south-east of Xilinhot, can be reached by chartered bus.



各草原蒙古包賓館位置圖
Location Map of Mongolian Yurt-Hotels

CITY PROFILE

SHANGHAI – THE GRAND CITY

Photos by Chen Huaiwen, Tang Zaiqing and Xie Guanghui
Article by Gloria Shang

Shanghai, China's largest city and most important sea port, became an international metropolis in the first half of the century. Known in the West as "Little New York" or "Paris in the East", it was once the financial centre of Asia.

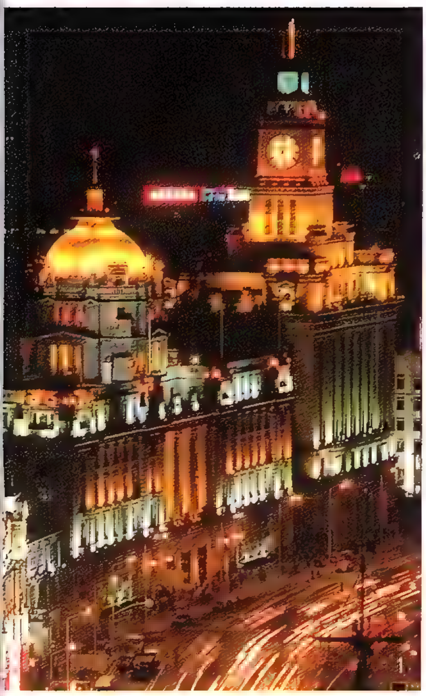
A unique geographical location and historical vicissitudes have given Shanghai a special rank in China's economic development together with a charming culture that cannot be found anywhere in the world, East or West.

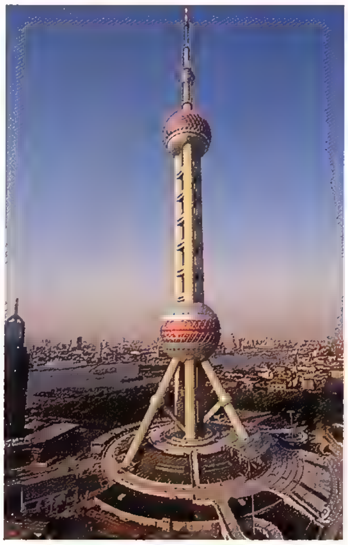
While a revisit may arouse nostalgic memories of the 1930s and 40s, the present Shanghai at the dawn of a new era will also surprise the traveller in many ways – the emerging Pudong New Development Area, the two world-class bridges crossing the Huangpu River, the highest TV tower in Asia, in addition to the new faces hustling and bustling at the Bund....

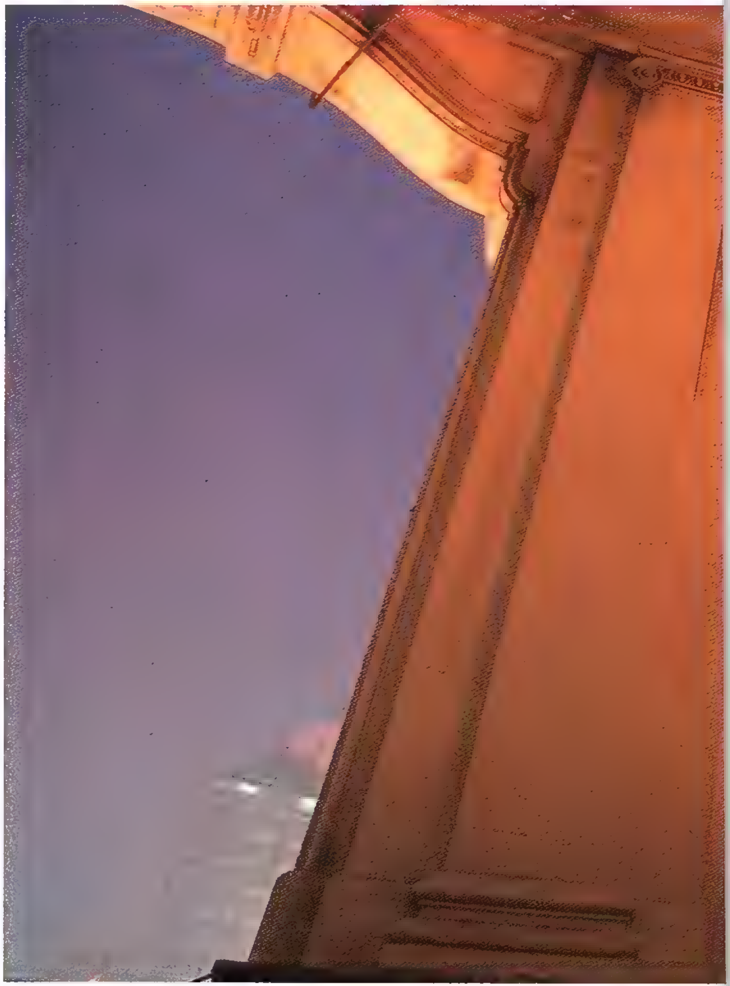
"Big Shanghai" is growing even bigger.

北京
Beijing
西安
Xi'an
Shanghai
Guangzhou
Hong Kong

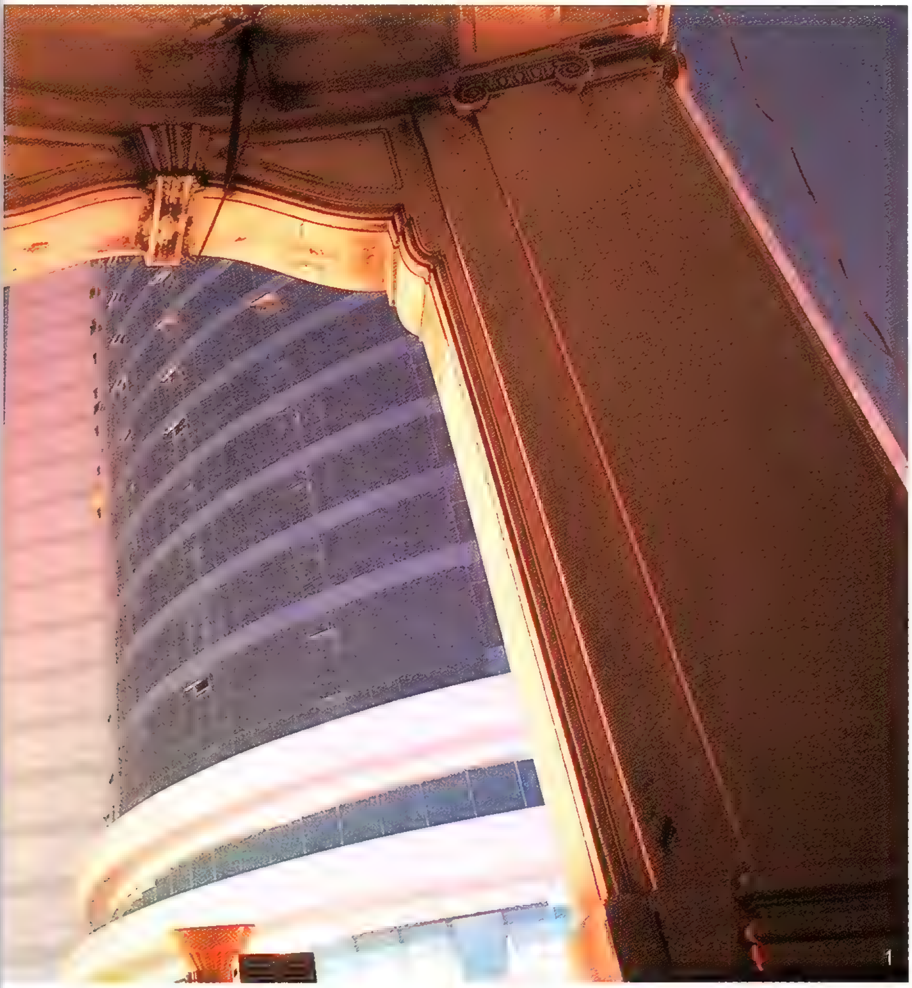
1. Nanpu Bridge has not only made it easier to commute between Pudong and Puxi, on the opposite sides of Huangpu River, but has also added charm to Shanghai's city scene. (by Tang Zaiqing)
2. Shanghai's skyline viewed from Lujiazui, Pudong (by Xie Guanghui)







1. The Bund by night (by Tang Zaiqing)
2. Pearl of the Orient, the Shanghai TV tower (by Xie Guanghui)
3. Shanghai's Children's Museum (by Chen Haiwen)
4. A new residential area in the western suburbs of Shanghai (by Chen Yat Nin)
5. The ceiling detail of a distinguished house in Hankou Road (by Chan Yat Nin)
6. Shanghai Museum by night (by Xie Guanghui)



1. A newly erected commercial building
   (by Chen Haiwen)
2. The cathedral in Xuhui District (by Xie Guanghui)
3. A rural scene in one of Shanghai's suburbs
   (by Chen Xiuquan)

SHANGHAI IN A NEW ERA

Situated on the coast of the East China Sea and neighbouring Jiangsu Province at the mouth of the Yangtse River, Shanghai is an international port city. With a population exceeding 12 million, it is also the largest and most densely populated municipality in China.

Shanghai is popularly known as "Da (Big) Shanghai". In addition to expressing the metropolis' size, both in terms of population and territory, the word *da* also implies its cultural atmosphere, its colourful potpourri of architecture and its thriving business activities.

Shanghai is one of the three municipalities directly under the jurisdiction of the Central Government. Under the municipal jurisdiction are 12 urban districts and 10 suburban counties, which occupy a total area of 6,186 square kilometres with a coastline of 200 kilometres. Although the city is not as old as some ancient Chinese capitals, Shanghai is China's earliest trade and industrial centre.

An Ancient Trade Port

During the Han Dynasty (206 B.C.-A.D. 220), the fishery and salt industries began to emerge in the area of today's Shanghai where once a few fishing villages were scattered. By the end of the 13th Century a textile industry also developed to such an extent that, at that time, Shanghai was reputed to "provide the whole country with

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clothing and bedding".

In the Tang (618-907) and Song (960-1279) dynasties, Qinglong Town (now Qingpu County) was an important port where import and export products were loaded and shipped. After the county of Shanghai was established in 1292 in the Yuan Dynasty, Shanghai eventually expanded to become a famous city in southern China in the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644) with its city wall being built in 1553. By 1685 when the Qing government set up the customs office there, Shanghai already had a population of 200,000.

After the Opium War of 1840, China was forced by the British government to open Shanghai as one of the five foreign trade ports (the others being Guangzhou, Xiamen, Fuzhou and Ningbo). Soon the American and French also made Shanghai a privileged trade port for them through unequal treaties with the Qing government. For a while, Shanghai became "a paradise for adventurers" where foreign business people swarmed in and competed with each other to grab a piece of this "land of gold". Western power nations, one after another, built their concessions. They controlled the customs, stationed troops and set up jails and their own police force. In 1920, the city had 26,800 foreigners registered among its almost one million citizens. Its flamboyant lifestyle was proverbial in the West and drew the wrath of many foreign missionaries. Modern in outlook, in the 1930s, Shanghai had the tallest buildings and the greatest number of motor vehicles of any city in Asia.

Shanghai occupies an important position in China's contemporary history. In 1902, Cai Yuanpei and Zhang Bingling founded the Recovery Society which later merged into the China Revolutionary League led by Dr. Sun Yat-sen, forefather of China's Democratic Revolution. Dr. Sun Yat-sen lived in Shanghai in the early 1920s to carry out his democratic revolutionary programme. A number of his works were written at his residence in Shanghai. In July 1921, the Communist Party of China held its First National Congress in Shanghai which elected the leading body and adopted the first party constitution, formally declaring the founding of the party.

1. At night, the brightly lit Bund is thronged with people, both locals and tourists. (by Xie Guanghui)
2. Kentucky Fried Chicken is popular with the Shanghainese. (by Chen Haiwen)
3. National Day, 1 October 1994 – it seemed the whole of Shanghai had poured out to enjoy the jubilant celebrations at the Bund. (by Tang Zaiqing)

An Important Industrial Base

Shanghai is China's most important industrial city which has more than 7,000 factories engaged in the production of iron and steel, automobiles, textile, electronics and bio-technological commodities, and food processing. Over four million of its city dwellers are workers or factory staff. The city's total industrial output accounts for approximately one-eighth of the nation's total.

It is also the country's most flourishing commercial city which has more stores than any other city in China. Shanghai has trade relations with more than 160 countries and regions throughout the world and its textile products and garments are world famous for their good quality. The city's import and export figures account for one-seventh of China's total. The new Shanghai harbour has become one of the world's 10 largest ports. It has more than a dozen loading and unloading stations along both banks of the Huangpu River, which handle more than 160 million tons of cargo annually, accounting for one-fifth of the national's total.

Shanghai's economy has entered a new era since China adopted the policy of reform and opening up to the outside world in the late 1970s. While existing pillar industries such as automobiles, textile and telecommunications are mature, rising pillar industries such as pharmaceuticals, bio-technology and new high-tech materials are gearing up. Over the past years, the electronics industry rose as a new star. In 1994, the output of video recorders, stereo systems, fax machines and micro-computers rose 160 per cent, 290 per cent, 1,800 per cent and 70 per cent respectively compared with that of 1993. Shanghai's gross domestic product (GDP) growth has hit double digits since 1992, reaching 12.5 per cent during the first nine months of 1996. Even more remarkable is the city's financial industry which has seen an annual average increase of 12.5 per cent with an 18 per cent increase for the first nine months of 1996 compared with the same period of 1995. A financial market is being formed in Shanghai with securities, monetary lending, foreign exchange and insurance as its four pillars. Securities have been the most active with total transaction volume reaching US$37 billion in 1995. In the first nine months of 1996, the total volume of securities business increased to US$55 billion.

Between 1996 and 2000, it is estimated that the entire investment in the city's fixed assets will be no less than US$120 billion, about one-third of which will be used in urban infrastructure projects. Airport, subway, railway, harbour and highway projects are already well under way. Meanwhile, the municipal government will invest US$4.8 billion annually to improve the city's environment. At the same time, the city will push forward the reform to revitalise its state-owned enterprises by means of annexation, co-operation and establishing sharehold companies.

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Shanghai is also a centre of science and technology. Its more than 200 scientific research institutes cover a wide range of areas, including nuclear physics, computer science, electronics, mechanics, technical physics and biology. Shanghai is an important cultural centre too. Many of China's famous contemporary literary figures, such as Lu Xun, Mao Dun, Guo Moruo and Ba Jin once lived and wrote their works in Shanghai. The city now has more than 4,500 primary and middle schools. Among its 50 higher learning institutes, there are world-famous ones such as the Communication University, Fudan University and Tongji University. As the birthplace of Chinese movies, Shanghai has four film studios and more than 100 cinemas and theatres.

The Bund: Witness of History

One major attraction to tourists and locals alike is Waitan, or the Bund (an Anglo-Indian word for embankment), along the Huangpu River. Here one can see clusters of old Western-style buildings standing along the embankment. Constructed in different Western architectural styles, many of these buildings were once the highest in Asia in the 1930s.

1. Mini-fashion show – a model posing in the street (by Chen Haiwen)
2. Stock Exchange Center in Jingan District (by Chen Haiwen)
3. Advanced teaching facilities are used in the higher learning institutes. (by Chen Haiwen)

Today, the enlarged and renovated Bund has become a riverside park. Leaning on the guard-rail, one can enjoy a panoramic view of the ships and boats plying the river, and the skyscrapers rising high in Pudong on the opposite bank. Also standing on the other side of the river is the 468-metre-high TV tower named Dongfang Mingzhu, or Pearl of the Orient. Completed in 1994, it is the tallest TV tower in Asia and the third tallest in the world (next to that of Toronto and Moscow). At the place where a sign was once posted reading "No admittance to Chinese and dogs", there is now a monument to the martyrs. The Bund is now frequented by locals and visitors from morning till night. In the early morning, the elderly come in groups to practise their Taiji, qigong and other exercises. In the evening, friends and lovers gather here, walking along the bank or sitting on the grass to whisper away the fatigue of their day.

The Bund once boasted over 100 banks, making Shanghai the financial centre of Asia. Today it has been revitalised to play an important role in China's strive for modernisation. Banks, Chinese and foreign, are dashing into the land where "gold is floating". The Chinese Foreign Currency Exchange, for example, traded nearly US$1 billion worth of foreign currencies within 10 days of its going into operation on April 4, 1994. Markets for various future's trading, such as oil, coal and agricultural produces are becoming fully-fledged.

Pudong: A Star of the 21st Century

Pudong refers to an area of 518 square kilometres on the east bank of the Huangpu River. While the west bank of Shanghai, Puxi, was developing over the past century, the land opposite in Pudong remained a rural area. Then, it seems almost overnight, this yesterday's "muddy ferry" and "garbage pile" became a hot spot of Shanghai, when in 1990 the area was listed by the central government as a Special Economic Zone provided with a series of preferential policies for its economy.

Over the first five years of the 1990s, priority was given to infrastructure development of the Pudong New Development Area. Businesspeople from other parts of China are encouraged to set up businesses in foreign trade in this area, and foreign companies are welcomed to invest in financial, foreign trade and bonded businesses. With Lujiazui as the core, a new financial and trade centre is taking shape. Roads, bridges and other infrastructure projects costing 20 billion yuan have been completed, while numerous commercial towers are rising. Among the newly-erected skyscrapers is the 88-storey Jingmao (Economic and Trade) Mansion, which is the highest commercial building in Asia and the sixth highest in the world. Domestic and foreign investments are pouring in to establish joint ventures or solely owned enterprises.

At Waigaoqiao, a 10-square-kilometre bonded area came into operation in 1993 to offer manufacturing and processing for exports. Inside this area, hundreds of overseas-funded projects have been constructed. Among them are world famous conglomerations such as JVC, Mitsubishi, Siemens and Bayer. On average, each square metre of land in this area has drawn in an investment of US$900. Meanwhile, the Huaxia Commercial and Tourist Area at Shanjia Harbour is blueprinted. Villas will be built together with beach facilities and a huge theme park. By the year 2010, Pudong, Shanghai's New Bund, is expected to become an international financial and trade centre.

**Data is based on government statistics and the report given by Mayor Xu Kuangdi at the Shanghai International Consultation Conference.*

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1. Morning exercise: retired couples dancing in a street park (by Chen Haiwen)
2. A garden in Jiading, a suburban county of Shanghai (by Chen Yat Nin)
3. Shanghai's Children's Palace (by Chen Haiwen)

Visiting Shanghai

Grand Shanghai almost provides too many attractions. A well-organised itinerary will help.

Morning Tea at Yuyuan (Pleasure) Garden

Inside the circle formed by Renmin Road and Zhonghua Road, Yuyuan Garden is representative of the southern Chinese garden architecture. It belonged to Pan Yunduan, treasurer of Sichuan Province of the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644). Originally occupying an area of more than five hectares, this royal-style garden took 18 years to complete. Walking through the Nine-Turn Bridge one can enjoy tea at the Mid-Lake Pavilion located on a lotus pond. Adjoining the garden are City God's Temple, the Confucius Temple and the White Cloud Temple. Take trolley bus Nos. 11, 16 and 26 or Bus Nos. 64 and 66, and get off at Laobeimen (Old North Gate), allow half a day.

International Architectures

From the top of the Sea Gull Hotel in the north of Waibei Ferry, one can have a panoramic view of the Huangpu River and the Bund. Walking by the riverside, you will see various Western-style architectures. Most of them are adorned with clock towers and turrets, marble pillars and wrought-iron entrances, each representing a distinctively individual appearance.

The former British Consulate (now the Shanghai Foreign Trade Bureau) is a Victorian house. The two buildings of the Peace Hotel were built about 20 years apart and in different styles. The southern building, the former Palace Hotel, dates from 1904. The northern building, crowned by a blue pyramid, once the Cathay Hotel, was constructed in 1928 in the style of the neo-Classical Chicago-School of US architecture. The Customs House is a classical building with a fine neo-Grecian metalwork portico.

The most eye-catching building is the Shanghai and Hong Kong Banking Corporation which now houses the offices of the municipal government. Built in 1921 the seven-storey edifice has a foundation of unpolished granite – firm and solid – the very embodiment of what one would hope for in a bank.

Religious Attractions

Longhua Temple can be reached by taking bus Nos. 41, 44, and 56. Preserved in the Song-dynasty structure are more than 7,000 volumes of Buddhist scriptures, a seal bestowed by Emperor Shenzong (r.1573-1620) of the Ming Dynasty and a gilded two-metre-high bronze statue of Vairocana Buddha. On top of the 40-metre Longhua Pagoda, one can see the high rises of central Shanghai to the north and the verdant rural land in the south. On New Year's Eve, the big bell in the temple is struck by 108 monks. A temple fair is held every year in the third lunar month.

The Catholic Cathedral at Xujiahui can be reached by continuing with bus No. 44. Built in 1904, the cathedral has two 50-metre-high bell towers. It has 19 altars and a hall which can hold Mass for 2,500 worshippers. The church remains an active religious centre for Catholics in Shanghai.

Jing'an Temple at West Nanjing Road can be found by taking bus No. 15. The temple is said to be first built during the Three Kingdom period (220-228). One valuable object is its huge bell cast in 1183 with more than 3,000 kilograms of copper. Inlaid in the wall is a tablet carved with the inscription of Emperor Guangzong of the Song Dynasty (960-1279). A temple fair is held on the eighth day of the fourth lunar month every year.

Jade Buddha Temple was first built in 1882 during the Qing Dynasty. The present temple was erected in 1918 to enshrine the two jade Buddha statues brought back from Myanmar by a monk. Uniquely, one sitting and the other reclining, both statues are carved from whole pieces of white jade.

Tasting Typical Shanghainese Food

Shanghainese cooking is best represented by its seafood and seasonal vegetables.

Typical dishes include: eight-treasure duck, bamboo shoots stewed with fresh and salted pork, soybean soup laced with tender meat slices, shrimp meat cooked with shark's fins and stir-fried eel. In autumn, steamed crabs and liquor-saturated crabs are specialities. A

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1. Grand View Garden, a reproduction of the residence described in the classic novel *A Dream of the Red Mansions* (by Chan Yat Nin)
2. Buddhist sculptures inside the Jade Buddha Temple (by Tang Zaiqing)

good place to taste these dishes is at the Old Restaurant in the City God's Temple.

At Lülangbo Restaurant, also at the temple, Shanghainese snacks are served such as Nanxiang-style stuffed buns, glutinous rice-flour balls, glutinous rice-four cakes with ribs, fried buns, crab-shaped sesame cake, etc. Yunnan Road is full of small food stands opening from early evening till late at night as is Zhapu Road, north of the Suzhou River. Huanghe (Yellow River) Road is also a nice but less expensive place to eat.

Flea Markets – Treasure-Hunting Tour

Antique collecting has become popular in Shanghai. Items being collected include matchboxes, stamps, newspapers, coins, cigarette packets, wine bottle labels, old clocks, watches, paintings and calligraphy by famous artists, porcelain, sailing boat models, teapots, ink slabs, stone seals, abacuses, chopsticks, fountain pens, locks and keys, butterfly specimens and...., you name it.

Many serious collectors have set up their own stores and in some cases private museums. Dongtai Antique Market has about 200 stalls. Liuhe Road Antiques Market, located near Dongtai Road has 150 stalls. Fuyou Road Antiques Market, open on Sundays, is a market place with over 800 mobile stands. For coin and stamp collectors, the best place is Shaojiabin Old Coins and Stamp Collecting Market located at the junction of Shaojiabin and Taiyuan Road.

Suburban Tours

A visit to the counties on the outskirts of Shanghai will help the traveller gain a better understanding of the history and culture of the metropolis.

Songjiang County can be reached within an hour by bus. One of the oldest towns in Shanghai, Songjiang County once had Shanghai under its jurisdiction. One of its historical sites is the Square Pagoda in the south-east corner of the town. First built in the Five Dynasties period (907-960) and rebuilt during the Song Dynasty (960-1279), the 48.5-metre pagoda contains Buddhist murals of the Song Dynasty. Also in the town is Shanghai's oldest structure, a 9.3-metre stone tablet erected in 895. On its 21 tiers are carved the complete text of the Dharani Sutra as well as Buddhist images of elephants, lions and wave patterns.

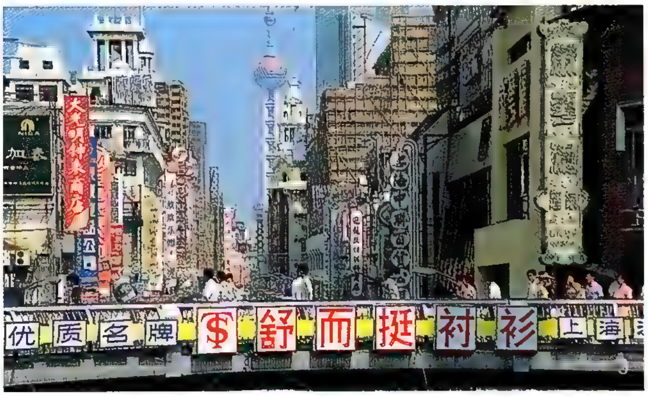
Further along the Shanghai-Songjiang Highway, one reaches Sheshan Hill where the Catholic church, China St. Mary's Hall, stands and continues its religious activities.

Qingpu County lies a dozen kilometres west of Sheshan, or 42 kilometres from Shanghai. The ancient town of Qingpu is embraced by water on all four sides. To its north-east is Qushui (Crooked Water) Garden built in 1745. Surrounding a lake, stylish bridges, pavilions and towers are built by the waterside.

Eight kilometres west of Qingpu Town is another ancient town called Zhujiajiao known for its typical rural scenes south of the Yangtse River. Here, residential houses along the river banks are of Qing-dynasty style and streets are lined with shops full of ancient flavour. Its Setting-the-Fish-Free Bridge built in the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644) is the oldest bridge in Shanghai.

About a dozen kilometres west of Zhujiajiao lies the Dianshan Lake Scenic Area which includes a water sports park, swimming pools, camping ground, a golf course and the Grand View Garden, which is believed to be the original model of the residence described in the Chinese classic novel *A Dream of Red Mansions*. Adjacent is the small town Jinze. Although it occupies a tiny area of half a square kilometre, the ancient town boasts 21 bridges – all of them integrated with temples.

Jiading is 40 kilometres north of Dianshan Lake. Emerging during the Zhou Dynasty, it grew in size to become a county during the Qin period (221-207 B.C.). Many of the historical sites are well preserved, including the Confucius Temple, the Guyi Garden and Nanxiang Brick Pagoda. In the Jiading District, a folk holiday village has been built on the Liuhe Island. Visitors can rent a boat to drift along the river, go fishing or stay at one of the farmers' homes and join in with the family's daily activities.

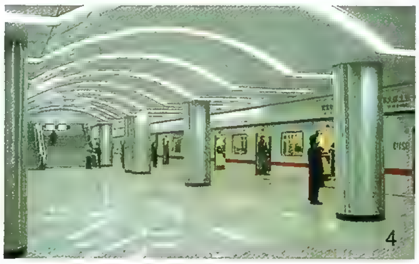


1. An in-door golf course in Shanghai (by Chen Haiwen)
2. The food stalls at the juncture of Nanjing and Yunnan roads are a favourite of locals. (by Xie Guanghui)
3. Nanjing Road East, one of Shanghai's busiest commercial areas (by Chan Yat Nin)
4. Shanghai's pristine 16-km subway has 13 spacious stations. (by Chen Haiwen)
5. In this luxurious hotel lobby, people can enjoy live music while sipping their tea or coffee. (by Chan Yat Nin)

For Your Reference

Transport

Airport: The Shanghai Hongqiao Airport is located 13.5 kilometres from downtown Shanghai, in the western suburbs. It takes about 40 minutes by bus from the airport to the city centre. Travelling between Shanghai and other major cities in China is easy owing to the numerous daily flights available. For instance, there are 31 to Beijing and 38 to Guangzhou every week. There are dozens of flights linking Shanghai with many overseas cities such as New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Seattle, Vancouver, Frankfurt, Madrid, Paris, Tokyo, Osaka, Bangkok and Singapore.



Railway: Shanghai is also a hub of railway transportation. From the new railway station, one can reach many cities and tourists spots by train. For information, call 6317 9090.

Seaport: By boarding a ship, one can travel from Shanghai to Chongqing and Wuhan along the Yangtse River, or sail to Guangzhou, Dalian and Hong Kong. For reservations and tickets, call Shanghai Port Booking Office (Tel. 63280010) at 1 Jinling Road East.

Metro: With a total length of 16.1 kilometres, the Shanghai metro has 13 stations in total. It operates from 6:00-21:00 with a flat rate of 2 yuan irrespective of distance.

Taxis: There are over 35,000 taxis in operation in Shanghai. They are divided into three grades with charges varying between 1.20 yuan, 1.80 yuan and 2.40 yuan per kilometre.

Accommodation

Shanghai has clusters of high-grade hotels, most of which are located in the downtown area. A few are listed for your convenience.

The Portman Shangri-La Hotel ☆☆☆☆☆ Add: 1376 Nanjing Road West Tel: 6279 8888 **Shanghai Jinjiang Tower Hotel** ☆☆☆☆☆ Add: 161 Changle Road Tel: 6433 4488 **Garden Hotel Shanghai** ☆☆☆☆☆ Add: 58 Maoming Road South Tel: 6433 1111 **Hotel Equatorial Shanghai** ☆☆☆☆ Add: 65 Yan'an Road West Tel: 6248 1688 **Shanghai Yangze Hotel** ☆☆☆☆ 2099 Yan'an Road West Tel: 6275 0000 **Holiday Inn Yinxing Shanghai** ☆☆☆☆ Add: 388 Fanyu Road Tel: 6252 8888 **Shanghai Yuanyang Hotel** ☆☆☆ Add: 1171 Daming Road East Tel: 6545 8888 **Shanghai Mansions** ☆☆☆ Add: 20 Suzhou Road West Tel: 6324 6260 **Jing'an Hotel Shanghai** ☆☆☆ Add: 370 Huashan Road Tel: 6248 1888

Museums and Libraries

Shanghai Museum of Natural History Add: 260 Yan'an Road East Tel: 6323 6630 **Shanghai Museum** Add: 201 People's Boulevard Tel: 6327 0276 **Shanghai Library** Add: 325 Nanjing Road West Tel: 6327 3176 **Family Exhibition Houses** Shanghai Folk Collection Exhibition House, 1551 Zhongshan Road South; Bao Wanrong Theatrical Costumes Exhibition, No. 11, Lane 77, Zichang Road, Pudong; Chen Baoding Calculation Instruments Exhibition, No. 8, Lane 378, Jianguo Road West; Chen Yutang's Collection of Ancient Jars, 326 Xizang Road South; Xu Sihai's House of Tea Art, No. 332 Xingguo Road; Zhao Jinzhi's Museum of Golden Keys, 11 Xueye Road, Pudong.

Entertainment

Shanghai Acrobatic Ground Add: 400 Nanjing Road West Tel: 6327 4958 **Shanghai Grand Cinema** Add: 216 Nanjing Road West Tel: 6327 0753 **The Great World Recreation Centre** Add: 1 Xizang Road South Tel: 6326 3760 **Daguangming Billiard Room** Add: 661 Yan'an Road East Tel: 6327 2050 **Gaoqiao Beach** Add: 100 Haigao Road, Gaoqiao Tel: 5862 2308

Hospitals

Medical Service Shanghai No. 1 People's Hospital Add: 85 Wujin Road Tel: 6324 0090 **Shanghai No. 9 People's Hospital** Add: 639 Zhizaoju Road Tel: 6377 4831

Travel Agencies

Shanghai China Travel Service Add: 881 Yan'an Road Central Tel: 6247 8888 Fax: 62475521 **Shanghai Tourist Corporation** Add: 2 Jinling Road Tel: 6321 7200 Fax: 6329 1949 **Shanghai Jinjiang Tours Ltd.** Add: 100 Yan'an Road East, 27/F Tel: 6326 2910 Fax: 6320 0595 **Shanghai Women's International Travel Service** Add: 245 Tianping Road Tel: 6437 1536 Fax: 6437 1336

Useful Telephone Numbers

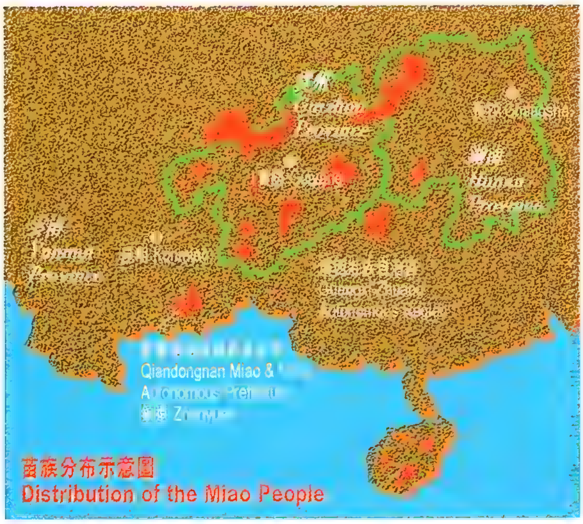
First Aid	120
Public Security	110
Fire	119
Weather	121
Information	114
Consumer Hotline	6322 9590

Climate

Shanghai has a warm and humid climate with four distinct seasons. The rainy season falls between spring and summer when there are often sudden showers.

Month	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Av. temp (℃)	4	4	8	14	19	23	28	28	24	18	12	6

THE COLOURFUL MIAO



苗族分布示意圖
Distribution of the Miao People

One of China's 56 ethnic groups, the Miao people are known for their unique customs, beautiful dresses and colourful culture. The Miaos are talented poets, singers, dancers and handicraft masters.

The Miao population is one of the largest minorities in Southwest China, with a population of about eight million. They live mainly in western Hunan, Guizhou and Yunnan, with some also distributed in Sichuan, Guangxi, Hainan and Hubei.

The ancestors of the Miao people originally lived in the vast areas in the middle and lower reaches of the Yangtse River. After the East Han Dynasty (25-220), they migrated to the Wuling Region on the border between present-day Hunan, Hubei, Sichuan and Guizhou provinces. Later they migrated westward, and finally settled down in the places we find them in today.

In the late 1950s regional ethnic autonomy was enforced in the areas inhabited by the Miao, and seven autonomous prefectures and 12 autonomous counties were established. Today, great advancements can be seen in hygiene, culture and education in the regions occupied by the Miao people; primary schools, middle schools and universities have been set up.

Clothing

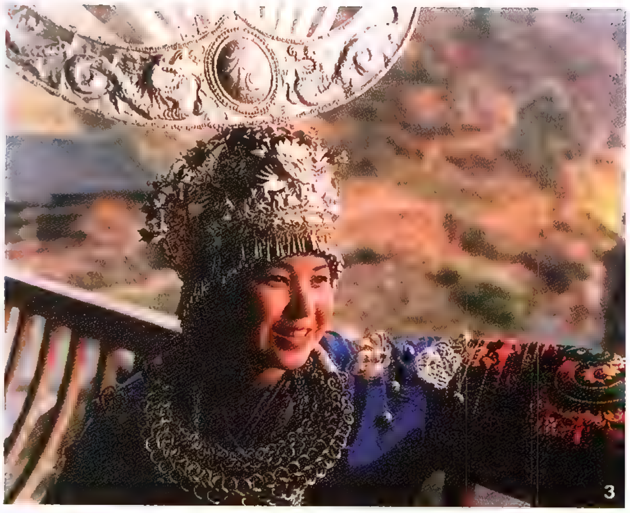
As the Miao people generally inhabit mountainous regions where temperatures are low, their clothes are sombre, thick and heavy. Men usually wrap several layers of dark cloth around their heads and wear thick jackets. The women like to wear colourful clothes in various patterns. Women's jackets have collars turned down at the front, and their skirts are very full with a tight waist band. The Miao, men and women alike, have plain clothes for everyday wear and another

1. Lesser Flower Miao in Guizhou (by Li Yingjie)

2. Smiling Miao girls, Guizhou Province (by Chan Yat Nin)

3. Silver ornaments worn by a Miao girl (by Qin Youwei)

4. The stunning headgear of the horn-haired Miao women, Guizhou (by Zeng Xianyang)



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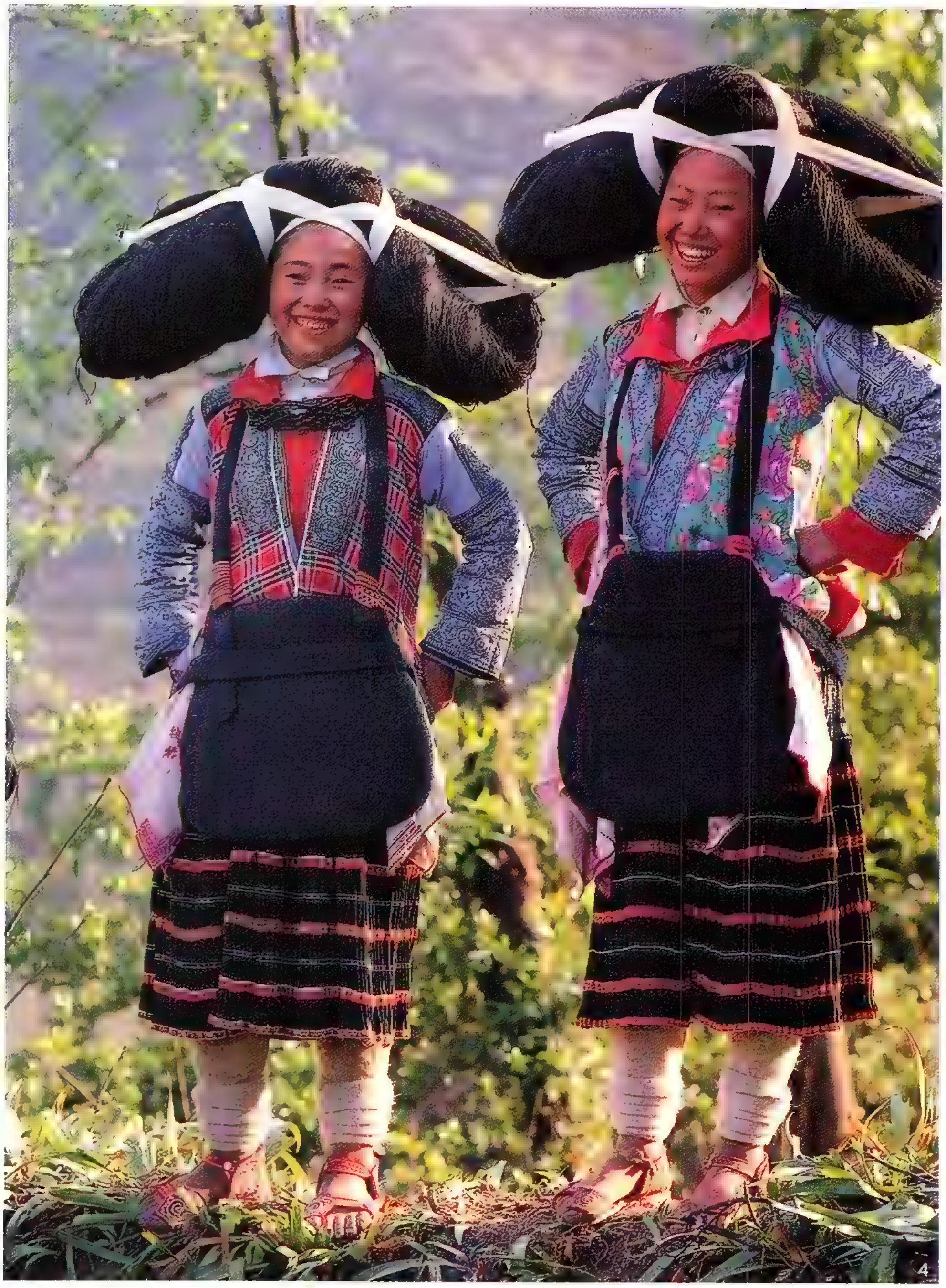

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set of clothes reserved for festivals or weddings.

In some areas it is easy to identify a lady's marital status by the clothes she wears. Take the coloured skirt for example: the skirt of an unmarried girl has the same uniform pattern and colour from top to bottom, while those for married women are edged in the lower part with a dark lace about four or five inches wide.

Dwellings

For historical reasons, most of the Miao hamlets are set on or at the foot of mountains. The Miao people tend to live together and seldom live in mixed communities. Generally, their houses are simple and crude probably due to the fact that they originate from a long line of nomads. In south-east Guizhou the Miao people build either one or two storey buildings. Houses built in the mountain valleys are mostly projected two-storey houses. The rooms on the upper floor have low ceilings and are used to store grain and other supplies. The Miao houses in Wenshan, Yunnan Province, have walls built of bamboo, while the Miao houses in Zhaotong, Yunnan Province, are simple thatched huts. The Miao people in western Hunan live on the mountains in houses constructed of local stone.

Food

The Miao people take rice, wheat and corn as their staple food, supplemented by beans, melons and vegetables. A traditional dish of the Miao living in Chengbu in Hunan Province is the Wu Rice made by cooking glutinous rice with the purple-blue extract from black grass which have been soaked in water. This kind of rice is not only a delicious dish for family banquets but is also given as presents to friends and relatives when wrapped in bamboo.

Pickled pork prepared by the Miao people of the Rongshui Miao Autonomous County in Guangxi, is also a speciality. There, every household has its own set of huge pickling jars. Pork pickled in this way can be preserved for one or two years. They also pickle chicken and fish.

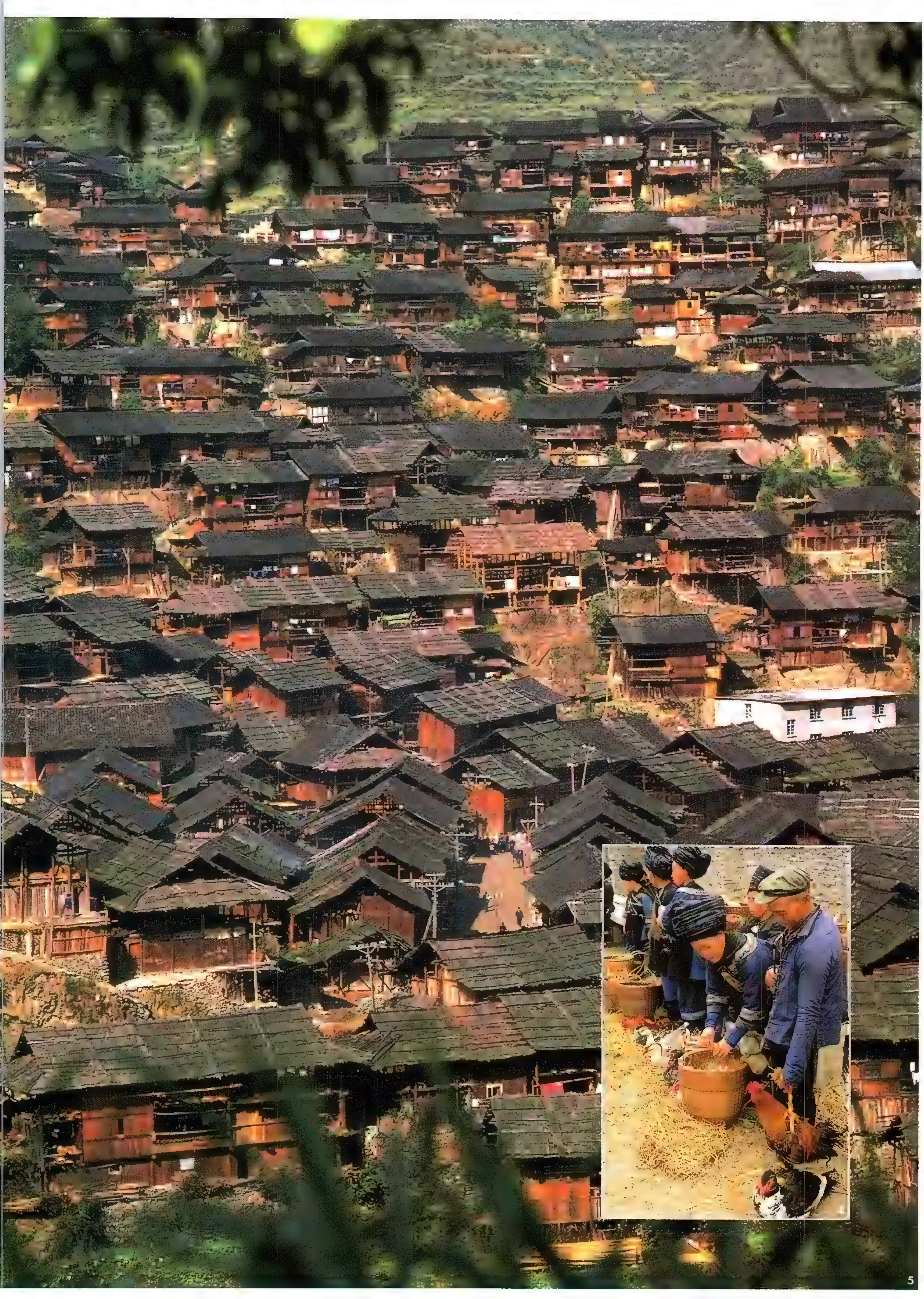
A soup of sweetened, fried flour is also served to entertain guests. A flour of maize and Soya-beans is baked first and then fried in tea-seed oil. The soup is specially prepared for the guest by pouring boiling water onto the fried flour to which some condiments such as salt, garlic and pepper are added.

Beliefs

Since long ago the people of the Miao nationality have worshipped nature, the gods and ancestors. However, as the Miao people live in regions where social conditions are different, their religious beliefs have become more diverse. They generally worship huge rocks, trees and caves, as well as some man-made things such as the god of the land, wells and stone bridges.

But the worship of ancestors is a common practice among all the Miao nationality irrespective of where they live. According to them, their ancestors deserve their trust and worship. So whenever a religious ceremony is held, they offer sacrifice to their ancestors first. In day to day life, each mealtime begins by offering a small plate of food to their ancestors. This custom is especially important to them when they

1. **Drinking in the rite before the dragon boat race starts, Shidong, Guizhou (by Wang Miao)**
2. **A Miao mother carrying her son, Weining, Guizhou (by Wang Miao)**
3. **Embroidering in the Qianhu Miao village, Leishan County, Guizhou (by Wang Dongyou)**
4. **A market in western Hunan (by Chan Yat Nin)**
5. **A Miao village at the foot of Mt. Leigong (by Zeng Xianyang)**



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have a meal of meat and wine. In addition, the Miao people collectively hold grand ceremonies and other sacrificial activities in memory of their ancestors every year. Some of these sacrificial activities are very large in scale.

Taboos

As some of the Miao regions are controlled by religious concepts, there are taboos both in production and livelihood. In some areas in south-east Guizhou, no one is allowed to work in the fields three days after the first spring thunder. In west Hunan no one is allowed to transfer manure from the first to the fifteenth day of every lunar month. Men and women are not allowed to marry one another if their birth time and date are not in harmony.

Marriage

The Miao people's marriage customs differ from place to place, but all are quite interesting. In the Miao villages in west Hunan, for example, when the bride arrives at the groom's home, an elder member of the groom's family must prepare a basin of clear water into which a silver bracelet is placed and everyone comes over to wash their face with the water. Called "Washing Face for Unity", this is to symbolise a peaceful and harmonious life. In Songtao in Guizhou, if a young man or woman takes a fancy to someone, they would go to him or her to beg for sweets. In the course of giving and receiving, both sides express their feelings for each other. In Longsheng in Guangxi, the Miao girls must make several dozen pairs of cloth shoes as part of a wedding dowry. A pair of soles must be stitched from beginning to end using a single needle. Should it break, it is seen as a bad omen.

In Chengbu, Hunan, the custom of "Scalding the Groom" is still quite popular today among Miao people. When the groom pays his first visit to the bride's family after they are married, he must accept the bombardment of firecrackers, which is done in a light-hearted, friendly way symbolising the riddance of his bad habits.

Festivals

Because the Miao people are distributed widely in the country, they enjoy different festivals. January 16 to 20 of the lunar year is the annual Lusheng (Reed-Pipe) Festival of the Miao people in Gaili in Guizhou. During the festival young men blow lusheng pipes while young girls dance to the music. The festival provides young people a chance to mix with each other.

October 5 to November 25 of the lunar year is the New Year of the Miao people in Kaili and Xiaoshan in south-east Guizhou. When the New Year arrives, every household celebrates by slaughtering pigs and sheep in the hope of having a good harvest next year.

In Longchang Village in Majiang, Guizhou, April 8 of the lunar year is the famous "Mountain Climbing Festival". When the festival arrives every year, thousands of young people gather together to climb mountains, compete in singing contests and hold other activities. It is a lively event.

The Miao people in Fenghuang, Hunan, hold a grand mass singing contest annually on June 6 of the lunar year, which is known as "the June 6 Song Contest Festival". On the day singers from every village hold singing contests on mountain slopes and compete with each other in singing Miao songs until early the next morning.

A good place for travellers who want to know more about the life and customs of the Miao people is the Qiandongnan Miao and Dong Autonomous Prefecture in south-east Guizhou Province. Fly to Guiyang, capital of the province, and then take train to Zhenyuan, from where a 30-kilometre bus ride will take you to the Miao community.

Article by Huang Yanhong

Translated by Xiong Zhenru

1. **Playing in tune while dancing (by Zeng Xianyang)**
2. **Dragon boat race, Shidong, Guizhou (by Wang Miao)**
3. **Miao dance in Langde, Guizhou (by Johnson Yeung)**
4. **Beating the big drum, Xiangxi, Hunan (by Chan Yat Nin)**
5. **Climbing up the post studded with swords is no mean feat (by Chan Yat Nin)**
6. **Playing bamboo flutes in a Miao village, south-eastern Guizhou (by Zou Baoyi)**

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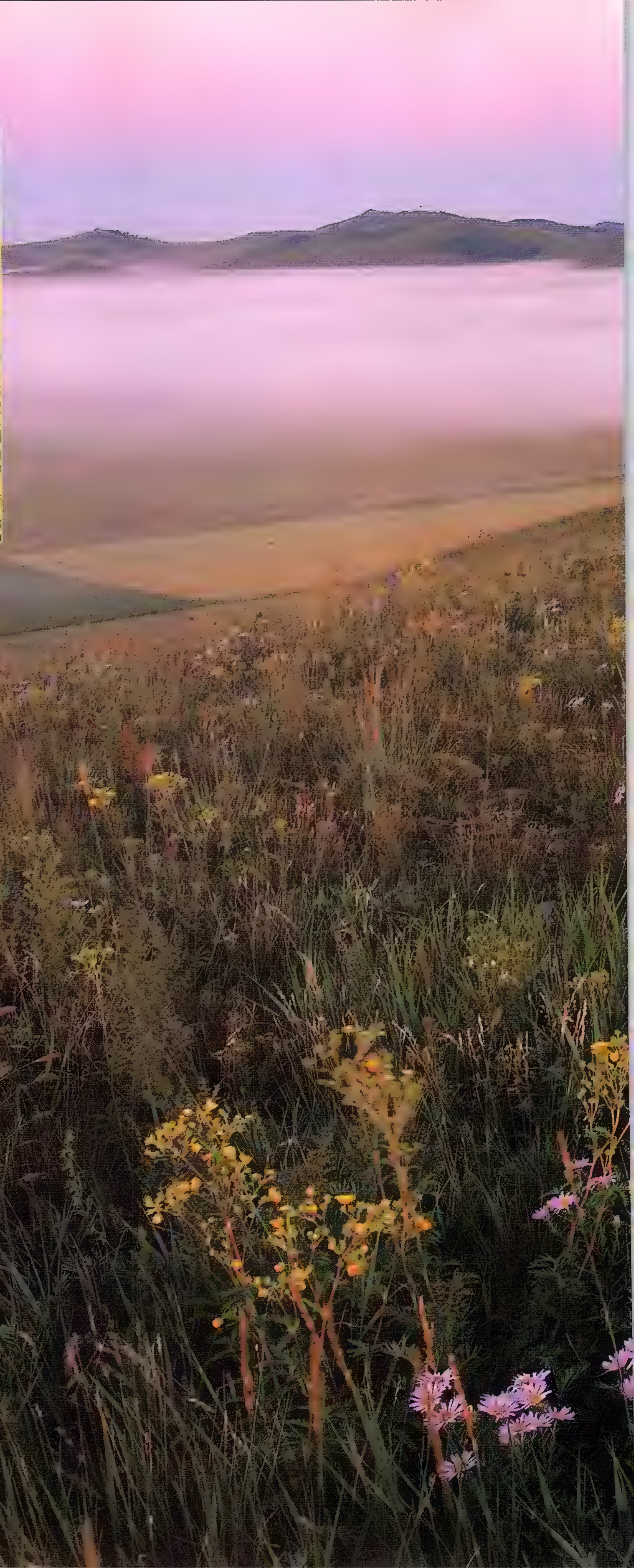
6

LANDSCAPE

BASHANG – A FRAGRANT GRASSLAND

Article by Jiang Ping and Yan Hong

1. (by Jiang Ping) **2.** (by Zhai Dongfeng)



The Hunting Ground of Emperors

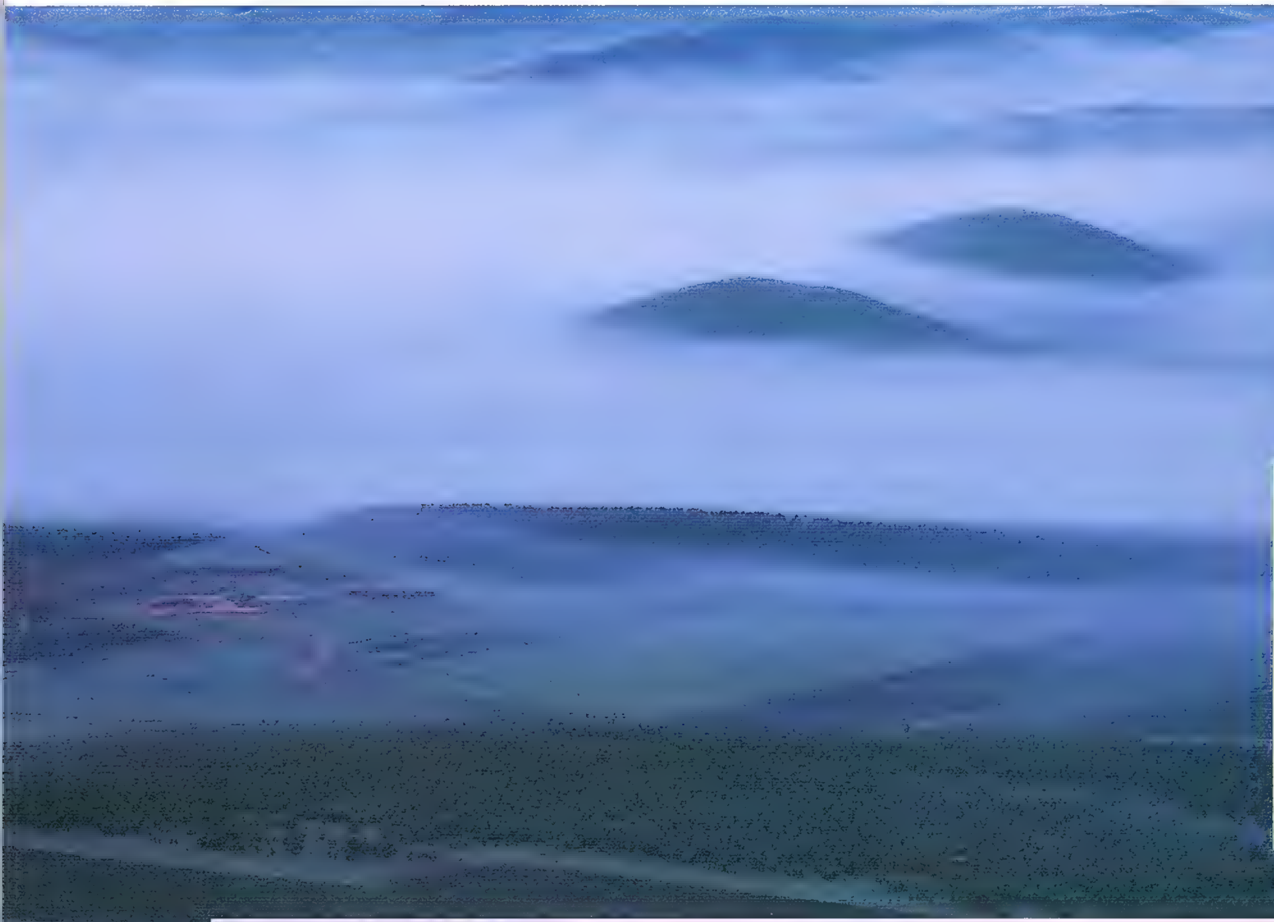
Mulan Weichang (Hunting Ground) is situated 175 kilometres north of the city of Chengde in northern Hebei Province. It was conceived and built by Emperor Kangxi (r. 1662-1722) more than 300 years ago and occupies a vast land of 10,000 square kilometres. Hunting parties were held here by the Qing emperors every autumn and awe-inspiring military manoeuvres were staged.

The quasi-military exercises often decided the fate of participating court officials, bringing them promotion if they did well or demotion if they did not. The emperors proved themselves worthy also – Kangxi himself once shot 318 hares in a single day (an unbeaten record), and at the age of 12 Emperor Qianlong (r. 1736-95) killed a black bear.

A Place Inspected by the Emperor

A mountain highway leads to the top of Daguangding Mountain, 1,772 metres above sea level, which overlooks the hills of Weichang County. The flat mountain top is covered by a sea of flowers, and from here one enjoys a panoramic view of expansive forests and rolling grasslands. Emperor Kangxi is said to have ascended this mountain for a bird's-eye view of the 72 fortifications in Mulan, thus the mountain is also referred to as the Grand View Peak.

1. (by Jiang Ping)



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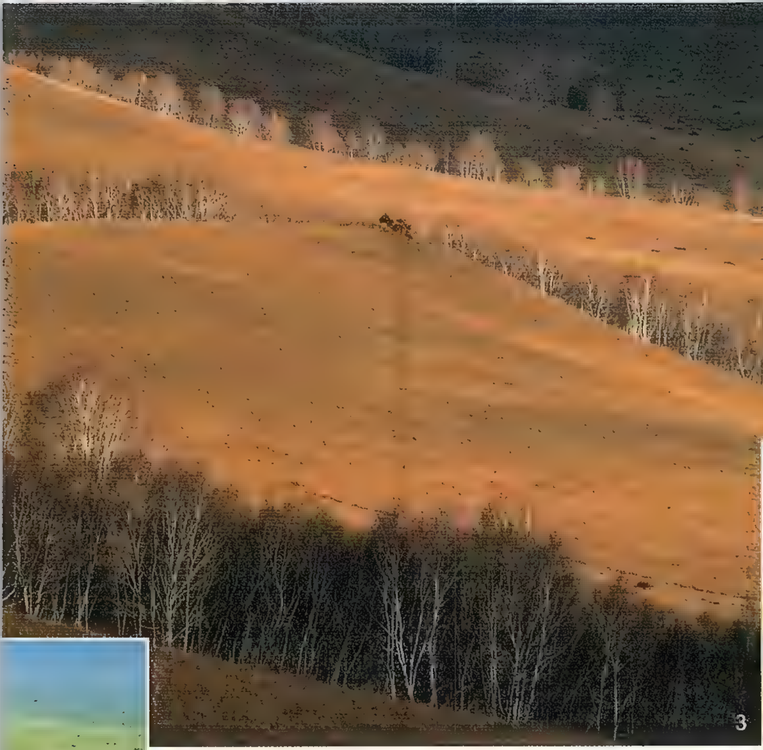

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The scenery is enchanting. In spring and summer, the area is alive with lush, green foliage; in autumn, golden grasslands are complimented by clear blue skies dotted with white clouds; and in winter, solitary white birch trees stand out proudly, waiting to contribute their beauty and vitality to the scene in spring.

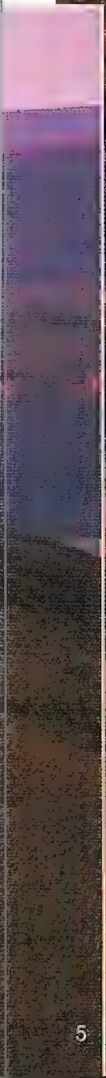
2

To walk through this mighty landscape gave me a special pleasure. However, I also felt slight apprehension, after all this was the place where emperors once shot down wild bears and ferocious tigers! In truth, there are no more large animals on the hunting grounds today, only hares and roe deer appear in bitter winter when the grassland is covered by snow.

The Scent of Wild Flowers

I travelled upstream along the Yixun River and along a labyrinth-like mountain path to reach the lush Saihan Highland at the southern tip of the Greater Hinggan Mountains. It was here that I really felt the vastness and natural charm of the highlands and, appropriately, Saihan, in Mongolian, means a beautiful mountain range. Sitting across from the northern part of Weichang, it is embellished with lakes, ponds, meandering rivers and streams. Major historical sites include a stone Buddha temple and the General's Lake. However, the biggest attraction are the flowers which grow in great variety and in a wide range of colours. On the paths through the forests, clusters of "little golden flames" jump into sight. These trollflowers are described by

1. (by Zhai Dongfeng)



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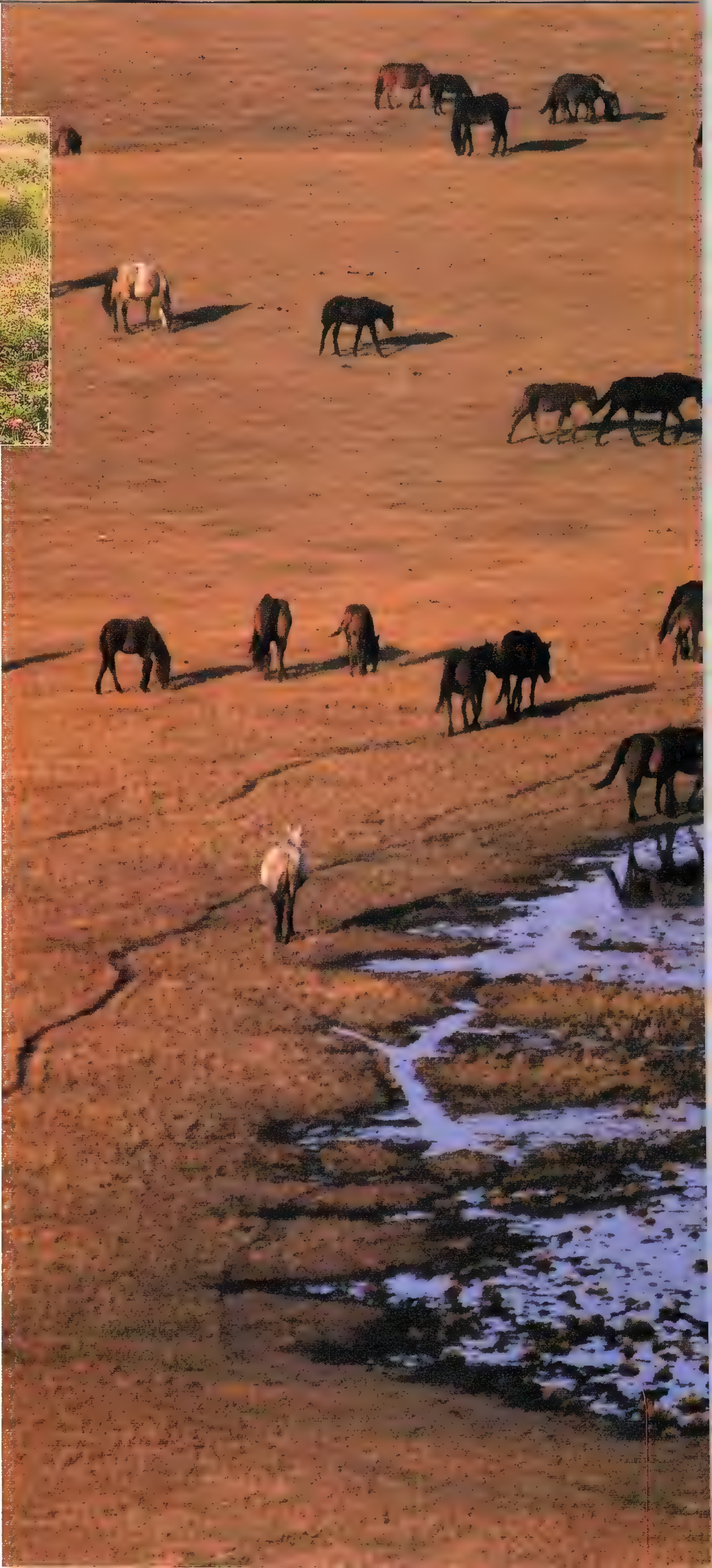


Emperor Qianlong as "golden nails pinned to the ground". In autumn, the mountain slopes are covered by wild chrysanthemums stretching as far as the eye can see. One ancient poet once wrote: "After galloping across the grassland, the hooves of the horses smell fragrant." Indeed, the tyres of our jeep emitted a sweet fragrance after being driven over the grassland. I imagine that if one rolls oneself on the grass, one's body will no doubt smell as fragrant as the flowers.

The General's Lake

In the Northeast of the Saihan Highland was once the Military Drill Terrace where in 1690, it is said, General Fu Quan issued his orders to the Qing imperial troops while on an expedition against the rebel forces commanded by Gaerdan (1644-97). Today the terrace has changed to a large man-made forest.

Several dozen kilometres north of the Military Drill Terrace is the General's Lake, which is believed to be the largest lake on the highland. I took a trip there to enjoy the vastness of the mirror-like waters and to relax myself by watching swans and geese fly overhead. I was not at all prepared to learn that this was also the site of a bloody battle, where a fight to the death lasted for three days. In the famous Ulanbatong battle the Gaerdan rebels were wiped out and Tong Guoquan, a general fighting for Emperor Kangxi, shed his last drop of blood for his country. People later named the lake "General's Lake".

Translated by Fred Huang

2

TRAVEL TIPS FOR MULAN HUNTING GROUND

"Bashang" refers to an area on the edge of the Mongolian Highland, which includes the Zhangbei, Fengning and Weichang highlands. Of the three, the Weichang Highland is the most noteworthy as its unique natural scenery has attracted many photographers in recent years.

Weichang Highland lies 450 kilometres north-east of Beijing. Normally, tours to the area begin from Beijing, passing through Miyun County, the town of Chengde, Longhua County and Weichang County, ending at the Red Hill Army Horse Farm on the Saihan Highland.

Weichang can be reached either by bus or train from Beijing. A daily bus service leaves from the Madian Long-Distance Bus Depot in Beijing for Weichang. The bus sets off at 7:00 in the morning and arrives at Weichang at about 5:00 in the afternoon. Spend the night at the Weichang Guest House where food and accommodation are provided at very reasonable prices. The next morning, take a bus from Weichang County to the Red Hill Army Horse Farm.

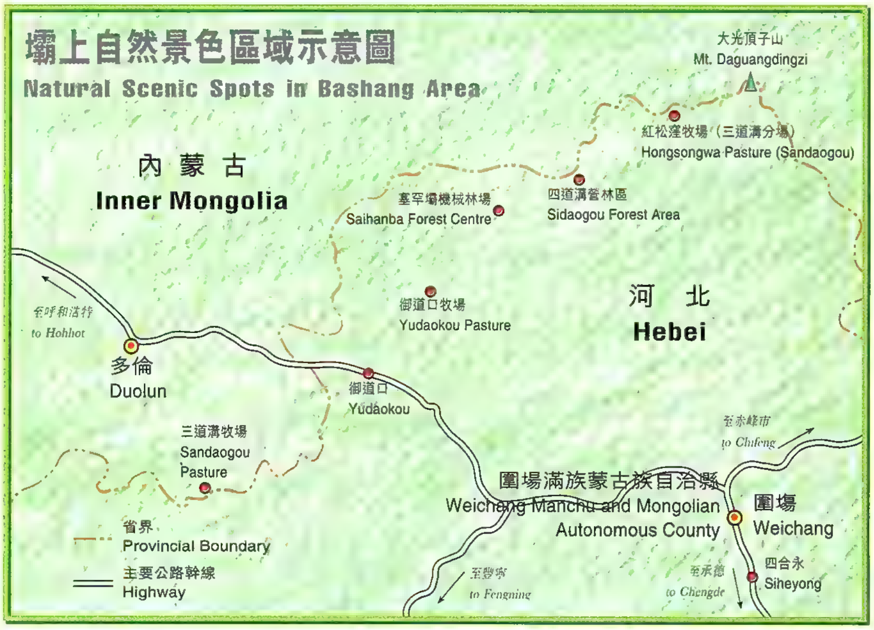
An alternative route is to take the No. 257 Beijing-Tongliao train which leaves Beijing's North Station at 19:05, and alight at Siheyong Town at 3:00 a.m. the next morning. Then take a bus from the station to cover the 20-kilometre trip to Weichang. From Weichang, it is possible to hire a jeep or mini-bus at a daily rate of 300 yuan which is relatively good value even if there are only two people.

The scenery at Weichang consists of two parts: the man-made forest which is the largest cultivated forest in northern China and the natural grassland. The latter has been developed into a provincial tourist zone. Well-equipped guesthouses have been built in the man-made forest, and there is also accommodation at the Red Hill Army Horse Farm.

The best season to visit the highland is June or September. However, as the area lies 1,500 to 2,000 metres above sea level, the first snow can arrive at the end of September. We advise you to take warm clothing. The landscape as a whole is pleasant enough to merit three to five days' exploration.

Translated by F. Huang

1. Capturing the beautiful scenery in a painting (by Shao Hua)
2. A convenient means of transport for photographers to get around.

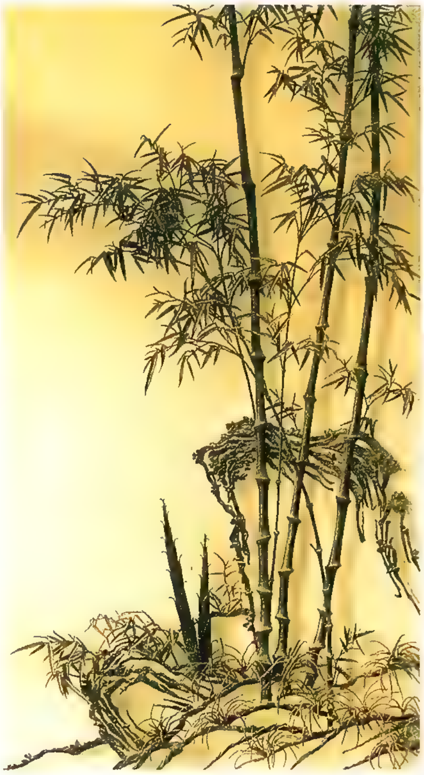


壩上自然景色區域示意圖
Natural Scenic Spots in Bashang Area
大光頂子山
Mt. Daguangdingzi
紅松窪牧場（三道溝分場）
Hongsongwa Pasture (Sandaogou)
內蒙古
Inner Mongolia
塞罕壩機械林場
Saihanba Forest Centre
四道溝營林區
Sidaogou Forest Area
至呼和浩特
to Hohhot
御道口牧場
Yudaokou Pasture
河北
Hebei
多倫
Duolun
御道口
Yudaokou
三道溝牧場
Sandaogou Pasture
至赤峰市
to Chifeng
圍場滿族蒙古族自治縣
Weichang Manchu and Mongolian Autonomous County
圍場
Weichang
省界
Provincial Boundary
主要公路幹線
Highway
至豐寧
to Fengning
至承德
to Chengde
四合永
Siheyong

THE WUHU IRON PICTURES

Iron Transformed into Pictures!

Before your very own eyes, amidst the clanging of metal hammers, sheets of iron are transformed into pine tree branches, bamboo leaves, flower petals, feathers, etc. Under the skilful hammer of the craftsmen each piece is laboriously pounded until it becomes the right size. Then it is set into place, piece by piece, onto the base board to form a picture. Visitors who watch this whole process are amazed at the workmanship and the end result.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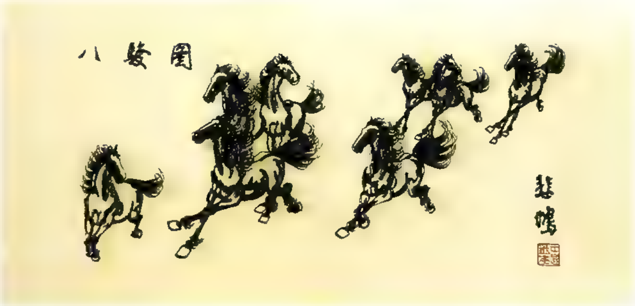
The skill of producing Wuhu Iron Pictures is a wonder of China. From a distance the piece looks like a dark sketch; then, as one approaches, it becomes three-dimensional; however, the most beautiful perspective is seen when slanting sunbeams illuminate the piece.

As an art form the Iron Picture originated in the Kangxi Reign of the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911). It was developed by a highly skilled blacksmith called Tang Tianchi who lived next door to the famous painter Xiao Yuncong, renowned for his traditional Chinese paintings. Tang loved Chinese paintings and would visit Xiao every day to watch him paint. As time went by Tang came to understand the rules of painting, and with the tools he was familiar with he used iron as his paper and a hammer as his painting brush! His first work was of bamboo which he entitled *Iron Flower*. It was regarded as an unprecedented art work and everyone wanted to buy it. From that moment on Tang Tianchi engaged himself solely in the making of iron pictures.

The Iron Picture developed quickly and the skill was handed down from generation to generation. In the last several decades it has seen rapid development, and a number of fine works such as *Galloping Horses* and *The Pine Tree Welcoming Guests* have been produced. The latter, 4.5 metres long and 3 metres high, is now hanging in the Great Hall of the People in Beijing.

If you would like to own an iron picture, a good place to visit is the sales department of the Wuhu Iron Picture Factory where you will have a great variety of iron pictures to choose from. Different grades of iron pictures have been wrought using many different techniques – their workmanship is reflected in the price – several dozen yuan to several hundred yuan a piece.



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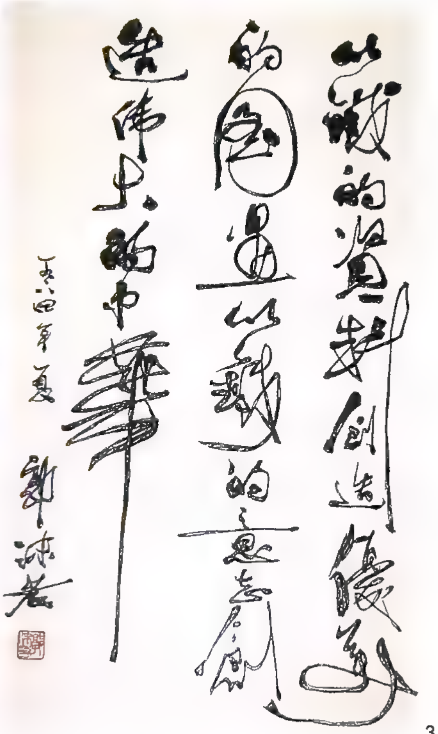
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Wuhu is located in the south of Anhui. From Wuhan and Nanjing you can get there by boat; from Hefei and Nanjing travel by train or bus.

Photos and text by Huang Yanhong
Translated by Xiong Zhenrulron

1. A bamboo grove under the slanting sunshine
2. Eight Horses in smooth, fluent lines
3. The inscription written by Guo Moruo in praise of the Iron Picture is made into an iron calligraphic work.

ALASHAN MONGOLIAN ROASTED LAMB

Roasted lamb (or Xuersunhaoni in Mongolian) is a traditional dish served when entertaining distinguished guests in Inner Mongolia, especially in the Alashan area. It is said that the dish originated in the days of Genghis Khan and has been handed down through generations.

The quality of the lamb is very important – it must be plump and sturdy with a big tail. The sheep must be three-four years old and supposedly has more than 23 kilograms of meat.

The sheep must also be slaughtered in the traditional Mongolian way: a hand is inserted into the sheep's abdominal cavity where the main artery is found and broken with the fingers. The blood thus flows into the abdominal cavity, leaving the flesh clean and also making it easy to collect the blood.

After the internal organs are taken out, the skin is cleaned. Then a mix of green Chinese onion, garlic, ground dry ginger, aniseed, Chinese prickly ash, salt and monosodium glutamate is placed into the abdomen. The cavity is then sewn up, and soy sauce and sesame oil is rubbed into the skin. It is now ready to be roasted.

The oven where the lamb is cooked is specially designed in the shape of a jar. It is prepared three hours in advance by burning pieces of hard fruit wood. At the end of the time, the wood is removed and the lamb is then hung in the centre of the sealed oven for about four hours. When the roasted lamb is removed the fat is released from the abdominal cavity.

The roasted whole lamb keeps its original shape and has a shiny golden skin. Usually, it is served on a large red lacquered plate in the squatting position, with a red silk ribbon tied around its neck and a bunch of fragrant grass in its mouth. At dinner it is placed in the centre of the table with the head turned towards the most distinguished guest. When everything is ready, the host holds a hada and a silver cup to offer milk tea while expressing his welcome to the guests. Young men and women clad in traditional Mongolian dress create the atmosphere by singing songs of praise to welcome the guests.

After the toast the host pulls a Mongolian knife from his waist and cuts a few symbolic pieces of meat from seven parts of the roasted lamb, which are placed into the wine cup. He then walks out of the house and sprinkles the wine into the air so as to offer sacrifice to Heaven and Earth. The host then comes back to the table to cut a piece from either side of the lamb's neck and presents them to the most honoured guest. When the ceremony is over, the cooks remove the large plate from the table and begin to cut the roast lamb. They first cut the crispy skin into small pieces and serve them to the guests as an appetiser while they dish up the tender, fragrant meat. The meat is served together with slices of green onion, a thick sauce, and Lotus Leaf Cake. Usually meat from the front

1

2

of the lamb is reserved for distinguished guests and the elderly.

Although roasted whole lamb is available at all hotels and tourist holiday resorts in Inner Mongolia, it is still necessary to order the dish in advance. A roasted lamb, large enough to feed several dozen people, takes time to roast. Usually one should book one day in advance, but during busy seasons it is sufficient to book eight hours in advance. It is a real dining experience to feast at a place filled with the atmosphere of Mongolian people entertaining guests and offering their hospitality.

Prices for a roasted whole lamb are as follows:

- Inner Mongolia Hotel in Hohhot: 1,000 yuan per lamb;
- Gegentala Grassland Resort: 1.500 yuan per lamb (specially prepared); 900 yuan (ordinary);
- Hasuhai Tourist Centre: 1,200 yuan per lamb;
- Xiritala Grassland Resort: 1,500 yuan per lamb.

1. Roasted whole lamb served at the table
2. The roasted lamb is tied with a red ribbon around its neck with fragrant grass in its mouth.
3. The cooks who serve the roasted lamb are all experts with their knives.

Photos & article by Shan Xiaogang
Translated by Xiong Zhenru

3

CHUN JIE

THE USE OF FIRECRACKERS IN ANCIENT CHINA

It may have been 2,000 or 3,000 years ago that a beast roamed the lands and besieged the peasants in China – it threatened to jeopardise their peaceful life. It's name was Xi and it devoured men, women and children alike. Unappeasable, insatiable and resembling a dragon it had the grace and agility of a lion and a jaw as big as a crocodile; its eyesight was so sharp that it could detect even the smallest spider.

The gods in heaven watched him nervously and decided to send someone to help the people. They sent an elderly man of outstanding wisdom and vast experience. Upon descending to earth the sage tracked down the fiend and tried to kill it. But the beast only became more violent. The heavenly messenger tried in vain to carry out his mission. He used every cunning strategy he could think of, as well as a few unprecedented divine interventions. In the end he was forced to flee.

Exhausted, and still gasping for breath he was at a complete loss at how to rescue mankind. Upon arriving back at the heavenly gates, a little boy, having observed the unfortunate encounter teased the old man unmercifully: "You are a wise old man, how can it be that you are unable to conquer an earthly creature? Let me try." The young boy, called Nian, was known for his adventurous spirit. He would sail the clouds until late at night, skilfully manoeuvring around the dangerous, thunderous ones, while tenderly caressing the white cottony clouds which float across the sky on a clear summer's day. Without waiting for permission he dove into the earth's hemispheres.

The trail of ravage that the beast left behind him was clearly visible from way up above, so it wasn't difficult to track down the beast. As Nian was only small of stature, he was easy prey, therefore he decided to avoid a direct confrontation. Plummeting quietly down into a village not yet devastated, he hid behind a hut where some peasants were busily preparing their evening meals. In those days they had no cooking pots and so would use sections of bamboo cane which, when placed on the fire, would crack open. They were then filled with fresh vegetables and meat and grilled over an open fire. Nian was feeling at ease in the warmth of the setting sun, lulled by the cracking sound of the bamboo canes and the smell of delicious food cooking on the fires, when all of a sudden, Xi (the beast) appeared out of the semi-dark.

Xi's appetite was insatiable. He darted into the first hut and greedily gobbled up the head of the family. The terrified villagers bolted out of their homes, screaming and yelling for someone to help them. The peaceful village had become a scene of carnage.

Little Nian, who had witnessed Xi's brutal acts from a distance, was himself in a state of shock. "How on earth could one stop this creature?" he asked himself. He had never before seen anything so dreadful. Certainly no magic spell would temper this beast. In despair Nian fixed his eyes on Xi.

Then, for some reason, the beast let go of his prey, and to Nian's astonishment the beast started to peevishly leap about. What was disturbing him? What mysterious power had abruptly halted his murderous intentions? Could it be the simple presence of little Nian? Did the beast sense the presence of a heavenly being? The boy tentatively approached him. The sight of this tender appetiser walking voluntarily towards him enticed Xi! Nian would be the next course on his menu! Poised like a cat ready to attack, Xi tucked his head between his front legs, stuck up his pointed ears, audibly inhaled, and was almost ready to pounce on Nian, when "Bang!" An exploding bamboo cane distracted Xi for a split second. He bolted towards the village gate, then stopped. He looked back in fury, composed himself and then got ready for another attack. Xi's sudden retreat had given Nian just enough time to climb up onto a rooftop. In truth, Nian was terrified. "Bang!" Another bamboo cane exploded. The noise almost snapped little Nian's already strained nerves. To his amazement, Xi seemed equally sensitive, for when Nian glanced around, he discovered the beast had vanished. Where would it reappear from next? Anticipating the worst, little Nian crouched in his uncomfortable position for a long time expecting the beast to return.

After a while, there was still no sign of Xi. Nian got down and told the villagers they needn't be afraid anymore. They should finish their dinner and then go to sleep as usual. He would stay awake overnight to guard the village. Hesitant about the correctness of Nian's speedy assessment, they reluctantly followed his instructions. What choice did they have other than to anxiously wait for dawn.

The following morning, they were astonished to find that everything in the village was exactly the way they had left it, and that they were safe. Could it be that what the boy had told them was true? The monster would never return? The peasants marked that day in their calendar. They still lived in fear for over half a year, but Xi was never seen again anywhere on earth!

The day that Xi was chased out of the village is still called Chuxi (chu = to do away with, Xi = the name of the beast). Another name for the same festival is Guonian (guo = to rejoice, Nian = year). Nian had discovered that Xi was afraid of the noise caused by the exploding bamboo canes, hence the tradition in China of celebrating the New Year by letting off firecrackers. Also, an elaborate meal is prepared in Nian's honour – chicken, the best food (rice in the south, dumplings in the north) and the most delicious wine are served and endless toasts are made for the future.... The day that the peasants had marked in their calendar coincided with a new moon and so it was interpreted as a sign of great change, good luck, health, prosperity and long life.

Vivid legends and myths still circulate, even in modern China. The peasants' lunar calendar, mainly used for agricultural purposes, has an equally strong influence on Chinese celebrations. Even today, particular heavenly constellations are considered to be heavenly signs which carry special meaning. If dealt with in the appropriate manner, even the worst evil can be avoided. Therefore, sacrifices and offerings are frequently made to celestial bodies. Urban residents also submit to these unwritten laws. In areas inhabited by high populations of ethnic groups these activities are especially conscientiously followed.

Photos & Article by Andrea Stelzner

1. A procession, Nuoliang
2. Ploughing the fields, Nuoliang
3. Talking to the gods
4. Offerings made to the gods

New Expressway, Guangdong

Workers have completed the eastern section of the Shenzhen-Shantou Expressway in South China's Guangdong Province, which is one of the province's major construction projects. The newly completed section, from Lufeng to Shantou connects to the western section of the Shenzhen-Shantou Expressway.

Genetic Testing to Prevent Panda Inbreeding

Scientists in Yunnan Province have developed a genetic ID technique to determine the fatherhood of giant pandas. Female pandas living in zoos usually have several sexual partners to increase the possibility of pregnancy. This makes it hard to identify the father, leading to inbreeding. Using a new genetic method, scientists at the Kunming Animal Research Institute under the Chinese Academy of Sciences are able to get the answers they need with just a lock of the giant panda's hair, and unlike blood testing, it will not harm the animal. It is expected to be of great help in boosting the population of both captive and wild pandas, of which only 1,000 exist in the wild and 100 in zoos.

Dolphin Station, Nanjing

A dolphin protection centre has been set up in Zhenjiang in Jiangsu Province to care for the white-flag dolphin (also called the Yangtse River dolphin). The rare species of dolphin, which is under State protection, has lived in the Yangtse River for more than 20 million years. One of the 12 most endangered species in the world, there are only about 100 of them left.

Tourism Shares

China will float 80 million B shares (designed for overseas investors) for the tourist industry, the first ever issued for tourism. The money raised will be used to accelerate construction of basic facilities and to adapt Huangshan Mountain, one of china's most celebrated scenic spots, to the levels required by international tourism.

River Valley Opens, Jilin

The Tumen River Valley area has been approved by the government to open to foreigners, except where army units are stationed. The area which shares a border with both Russia and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, has been regarded as a strategic site that was closed to outsiders even though the Hunchun area had opened to outsiders in the early 1990s.

Yellow River Dam Taking Shape

Xiaolangdi, a multi-purpose water control project on the middle reaches of the Yellow River, some 40 kilometres north of Luoyang in Henan Province, is second in scale only to the mammoth Three Gorges Dam Project on the Yangtse River. Construction began in 1994 involving 14 companies from Germany, Italy, France and China and will cost some 37 billion yuan (US$4.5 billion). The dam will be completed by the end of October 1997 and is expected to withstand some of the worst flooding experienced in the area over the last 1,000 years.

Beijing to Repair Ancient City Wall

The only section of the Beijing city wall remaining from the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644) will undergo repairs and become a cultural site to protect the culture of this ancient capital city. The 500-metre fragmented wall, located near the corner of Dongbianmen and connected to the Ancient Observatory, was originally 12 metres high but is now only seven metres high and is missing bricks in certain areas.

Renovation work will be carried out to maintain the wall and, if possible, to restore its original appearance.

New Clues for Xi'an Warriors

A Sino-German team has discovered a new chemical compound in the paint of the terracotta warriors and horses of Xi'an, Shaanxi Province.

Experts say the find will help preserve the figures that have guarded the tombs of China's first emperor Qin Shi Huang, who united China and set up the Qin Dynasty (221-207 B.C.). The joint archaeological team also discovered that the wood used to make the shelter over the figures is composed of fir, dragon spruce, Chinese hemlock and elm and that chalk accounts for the bulk of the clay used in the pit which houses the figures. The discoveries offer fresh clues in the study of the warriors.

Xi'an Mausoleum Improved

A bridge, three squares, a parking lot, a road and a large area of green land have been added to the Mausoleum of Huang Di in Xi'an, Shaanxi Province. The new additions, costing US$6 million are part of the first phase of renovations to the mausoleum which have long been regarded as sacred land by the Chinese, and which attracts approximately 400,000 visitors a year.

Sun Yat-sen Memorial Hall Opens to Public

The Sun Yat-sen Memorial Hall in central Beijing has opened to the public for the first time since the founding of New China on October 1, 1949, to mark Dr. Sun's 130th anniversary of birth. Dr. Sun Yat-sen played a leading role in organising the revolution that eventually overthrew the Qing Dynasty in 1911 and ended the millennia-old monarchical system in China.

NEXT ISSUE

Zhu Lin

Tai Chi Yin

Our next issue celebrates the ***200th issue*** *of China Tourism.... We dedicate it to promoting China's* ***20 best scenic*** *spots — from North to South, West to East, we hope our 200th edition will be your invaluable and worthy companion as you travel from frozen plateaus to sun-drenched beaches and from lush pastures to dry, barren deserts. Another great celebration is that of marriage. It marks a new chapter in one's life and the Chinese have always attached great importance to the* ***wedding ceremony*** *— even though the pageantry surrounding it may have changed with the times.*

Jiang Yubin

Xu Jianrong

石破驚天
獨有黃山煙
黄山
TEZHI HUANGSHAN
证书
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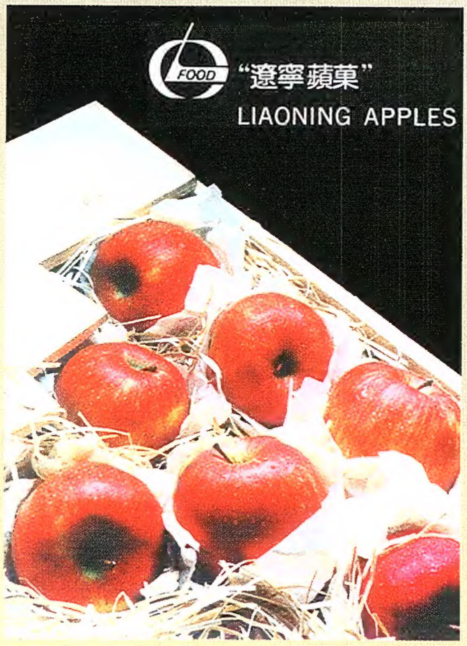

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Liaoning Fooda Group Corporations (Liaoning Foodstuffs Imp. & Exp. Corp.) is an industrialized and internationalized enterprise group on both domestic and foreign trade, with a history of nearly 40 years and incorporating trade, industry and agriculture into a whole.

In the period of "8th Five-Year Plan", the total foreign exchange income exceeds USD 600,000,000.00, in 1995, the annual imp. & exp. trade amounts to 160,000,000.00. With fixed assets of nearly ¥200,000,000.00, our facility-advanced, 19-storey office building is located the downtown district in Dalian. Besides 11 sections more than 100 kinds of traditional commodities:aquatic products,meat,fruit and vegetables, canned foods and drinks,ets.,in recent years we developed our business scope on textile, mineral, chemical and many other fields, involving storehouse, process, transportation, as well as freight forwarding, chemical and motor car repairs, etc.. The group consists of 10 administration departments, 17 business branches and 6 directly subordinate enterprises, totally 1200 employees including 420 administrative and professional personnel versed in foreign trade. In China, we own stable supplies of goods from most of the provinces, and in the world, we have established good trade relationships with nearly 300 customers from more than 40 countries and regions, also set up several resident offices in Russia, America, Japan and South Korea.

Guided by the enterprise spirit of "Responsibility, Innovation, Dedication & Harmony", with Liaoning Foodstuffs Imp. & Exp. Corp. as main part, Fooda Group is willing to cooperate sincerely with all friends in trade circle over the world for opening up grand prospects.

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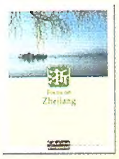

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